LETTERS FROM THE CONTINENT

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B. B. R. A. S.

BOMBAY BRANCH
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Letters

FROM

THE CONTINENT.

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LETTERS

FROM THE

CONTINENT

DURING THE MONTHS OF

OCTOBER, NOVEMBER, AND DECEMBER,

1818:

INCLUDING A

VISIT TO AIX-LA-CHAPELLE,

AND THE

LEFT BANK OF THE RHINE.

BY THE

REV. JAMES WILMOT ORMSBY, A. M.

Chaplain to his Excellency the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, and Rector of Castlecomer.

QUOT HOMINES, TOT SENTENTIÆ.

PRINTED FOR LONGMAN, HURST, REES, ORME, AND BROWN,

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Preface.

IT will be evident from a perusal of the following pages, that they were written, *currente calamo*, and therefore it may be proper to apologise for the lateness of their appearance. It arose from circumstances of a private nature, which, however favorably they might be received by a generous and indulgent Public, cannot be obtruded upon their notice. I would persuade myself, that the interest of the Work has on the whole been rather increased than diminished by the delay; and if my readers

should be of the same opinion, my anxiety upon that score must necessarily cease.

It may be inferred from my motto, that I have recorded the sentiments of many men; and, in doing so, I may assume the merit of not having deducted from their force, by suppression or misstatement, although in repeated instances they were at variance with my own. The greatest difficulty I had to encounter was to avoid the imputation of plagiarism, the countries I visited having been so frequently described by others. In this I would deprecate the severity of criticism, if the Reviewers should condescend to honour me with their notice. What can escape their scrutinizing eye? They know, that there is nothing new under the sun, most especially in books; and I must throw myself upon their

candor and liberality to recollect, that even their own lucrative and learned publications are indebted for somewhat of their value and attraction to quotations from works, which have been already in print. When I have sinned in this particular, and, if often, it has been unconsciously, may I not hope for the forbearance of these formidable arbiters of every author's fame.

For my opinions I am not prepared to offer any apology; they are the result of long-matured reflection and the most authentic and unprejudiced information.

Twickenham, Middlesex, 1819.

ERRATA.

Page 3, *For* incessent peel *read* incessant peal.
39, *For* nonor *read* honor.
40, *Line* 1, *for* was *read* is.
48, For *cununt* read *currunt*.
50, *After* immaculate *a full stop*.
71, *For* these *read* those.
For 842 *read* 814.
73, *For* aviditity *read* avidity.
89, *For* write here *read* write it here.
95, *For* successively *read* successfully.
118, *For* Ancilla *read* Ancillæ.
119, *Between* the Rhine and a *insert* a comma.
137, *Line* 10, *omit* single.
140, *For* meredian *read* meridian.
146, *For* connections *read* connexions.
151, *For* inviduous *read* invidious.
152, *For* intention *read* intentions.
155, *Line* 19, *omit* and.
158, *For* tendency *read* tendencies.

LETTER I.

Lille, October, 1818.

YOU know it was my intention, when I left England, to have proceeded without loss of time to Aix-la-Chapelle; but having heard at Calais that the allied armies were to be reviewed in the neighbourhood of Valenciennes, preparatory to the evacuation of France, I determined upon altering my course. The interests of Europe could not suffer by my absence from the Congress, and I promised myself no small satisfaction in looking at those troops assembled, to

whom the world is indebted for its repose. You must therefore be for some time contented with the detail of whatever may appear interesting on my journey, and I shall trespass as little as possible upon your patience by the repetition of what has been so often and so agreeably described by others. But when I reflect upon the importance of the period, particularly upon the great change which is about to take place in the condition of France, and the effects it may be reasonably expected to produce upon the manners and sentiments of the people of that country, I need not despair of being able to afford you some amusement. Of this you may be assured, that I shall endeavour to ascertain the truth by all practicable means, and that having done so, I shall communicate it to you with the strictest impartiality.

At Calais there was not any thing attracted my attention so much as the magni-

ficent altar of Italian marble; it was on its way to England many centuries ago for the Cathedral of Canterbury; but, having suffered some injury in the carriage, was purchased and placed in its present situation. The beauty of it is not a little increased by a painting, in the center, of the Assumption of the Virgin, by Vandyke. While I was in the church military mass was celebrating. It is not easy at any time to collect much of what the Priest is pronouncing at the altar: but here it was impossible, as there was an incessent peel of martial music, and the bowing, the kneeling, and the crossing of the congregation, were regulated by the trumpet and the drum.

I had now to travel in a *diligence* for the first time, of which, from description and appearance, I had a considerable horror. Independently of certain valid reasons which you can readily imagine it was my wish to combat every inconvenience, in order to be-

come acquainted with the various tribes and characters which that cavern generally contains. To my great astonishment I found it the most easy and commodious public carriage I had ever sat in, and so free from noise that I could converse without the slightest risk of injury to my own lungs or to my neighbours' ears. We went, it is true, but at the rate of five miles an hour, which to those who are accustomed to the rapidity of an English mail coach must be tedious. For myself, however, I had rather creep in safety than fly in danger; and, inglorious as the sentiment may be, when you are at my time of life, you will probably be of the same opinion.

At Dunkirk, they informed me, that the population, which before the revolution had been thirty, was reduced to nineteen thousand; but the commerce of the town is rapidly reviving, and the docks and quays are rendered doubly interesting by the assemblage of vessels and the variety of merchan-

dise they display. The pier is extending a considerable way beyond its former limits, which will be a work of great importance when complete. What pleased me most here was a small chapel close to the sea, erected within the last two years. It was built expressly for sailors to offer up their vows before a voyage, and for their friends, in bad weather, to implore the mercy of Him, whom the winds and the waves obey. The walls are covered with naval prints, descriptive of miraculous escapes, and I was assured, that it is filled by seamen every Sunday, very much frequented on the week days, and that they, for whom it was intended, are most thankful for the gift. Might not this example be imitated with the happiest consequences in every seaport town in England—the mere appropriation of a place of public worship to the one profession would, in my humble opinion, insure its success.

For the entire way from Dunkirk to Lille, seventeen leagues, there is a row of well grown trees on each side of the road, and the country, as far as the eye can reach, is so thickly planted, that they say, half the land is occupied by timber. The fertility of the soil and the neatness of the agriculture I need not describe; the only thing which struck me as peculiar was, that the men sat or stood upon the harrows while they drove them along, evidently for the purpose of giving them more power upon the ground, which may be necessary, as the teeth are of wood. At Lille there is much to engage and gratify the traveller. The theatre is spacious and the orchestra excellent. In the museum there is a very fine gallery of pictures, but they are hung so closely, and with so little regard to regularity, that for a long time you are rather dazzled than delighted; but astonishment soon yields to admiration, as you behold the works of the

most celebrated masters of the Italian, the Flemish, and the French schools. In the same building is a library, containing nineteen thousand volumes in all branches of literature, and some curious and valuable manuscripts, at all times open to the public, under certain necessary restrictions. In the Foundling hospital and workhouse there are constantly seventeen hundred men, women, and children, and the same number of infants on the establishment kept out at nurse until they are two years old. The children, when sufficiently grown, are employed in different trades in the town to the age of eighteen; one half of their earnings goes to the house, the other to themselves, and thus they remunerate the institution, and are stimulated to industry. I am sorry to add, that in one room, where there were above three hundred girls at work, not one of them had the appearance of health; in another about one hundred were knitting, and at the same time

rehearsing aloud the different responses to their prayers. This had indeed a most ridiculous effect, for the dissonance and jumble can scarcely be conceived. It proved, however, a laudable attention to their religious education.

If I had seen the celebrated citadel of Vauban, I probably should not attempt to describe it, and I mention it merely to state, that for the last six months no stranger has been admitted within its walls. They might have trusted me, for I should have drawn no plans and told no secrets. But I was taken to the *Promenade d'Esplanade,* one of the sights for strangers, and a duller walk, between straight rows of trees along the banks of a canal, is no where to be found.

This morning I was assailed in the streets by a number of ragged boys vociferating, "*Monsieur, vonlez vous un Commissionaire,*" and it was one of themselves who was to be dignified with this fine sound-

ing title. Forbidding as their appearance may be, they are useful guides to the different objects of curiosity, and in the most obliging but officious manner they offer to supply all your wants, imaginary and real. Upon the talents and character of this class depends very much the comfort of perambulation through a town, and I would therefore recommend it to you, when travelling upon the Continent, to ask the master of every inn you stop at for an intelligent and respectable *Commissionaire*.

LETTER II.

Cambrai, October.

IN the immediate vicinity of Lille, the extraordinary number of wind-mills employed for the oil of Colzat is a most striking and singular object, as you can embrace in one view from two to three hundred of them. The country became now more open, and the boundless plains of pasture and cultivation were calculated rather to fatigue than gratify the eye. Here for the first time I observed the simple yet comfortable contrivance of little huts on wheels, for the shepherds to sleep in at night, or for shelter

in bad weather. We are not accustomed to large fields of beetroot, and I asked the director of the *Diligence*, what use was made of such enormous quantities? He said, that at present they were only food for cattle in the winter; but that Buonaparte, who succeeded in every thing he undertook, had made excellent sugar from them, which could not now be done. To this I replied, that he had failed in one thing—he could not beat the Duke of Wellington. With all the characteristic vivacity of a Frenchman, he exclaimed, "*Mais, Monsieur, que voulez vous? Le Diable luimeme ne pourroit faire cela.*" As he granted my exception, it would have been cruel to question the omnipotence he asserted for Napoleon. Something similar occurred in the evening at Douai. The book for entering the names of travellers was brought to the supper-table. A young Englishman, when he came to the column of professions, observed, he did not know

what to write, being a private gentleman. A Colonel in the French service desired him, with some degree of pertness, to call himself John Bull—no, said the young man, we have lost that title, and he wrote—John Waterloo. To the credit of the officer he took it in good humour, and laughed heartily at the spirited and just reproof he had provoked.

I arrived at Cambrai on the anniversary of the Queen of France's death, and went to the cathedral, which was filled by the inhabitants. Her affecting letter was read by one of the priests from the pulpit in the most unimpressive manner; it drew some tears from a very few of the congregation, but was heard by the majority without any emotion. The church of *St. Géry* was tastefully decorated with emblems suitable to the occasion; on one of the banners was inscribed,

" *Pour un Francais fidele, il ne'st point d'autre loi,*
" *Que l'amour pour son Dieu, que l'amour pour son Roi.*"

Happy will it be for Europe, if there are many of those *Fideles*; and here let me observe, that having heard in England, from a variety of visitors to this country, that religion was here not only neglected but ridiculed, I have made it my particular study to ascertain the fact, and I shall continue to do so. The result of my hitherto limited observation is the reverse of this statement, having seen and heard that the churches overflow on Sunday, and are as much frequented on the week days as at any preceding period. It is true, that the solemnity of the Sabbath is violated by shops and theatres being open, and that labour is in no degree suspended, when it suits the interest or inclination of the individual to work. But thus it has ever been in Catholic countries: and they do not think that the prayers of the morning are invalidated by the amusements of the evening. In regard to their fidelity to the King, I

can merely give you at present the substance of a conversation with a very intelligent Frenchman, at whose house I passed an agreeable day. He had served under Buonaparte for many years, and is certainly no lukewarm admirer of his military talents. He thinks the nation is heartily sick of war and revolution—that there may, and do exist, many disaffected and perturbed spirits, but that they are outnumbered by such a vast majority, it will be impossible for them ever to attempt a disturbance of the present tranquillity—that, although some individuals were enriched, thousands were impoverished by war—that they have now begun to taste the sweets of peace—good sense is resuming its empire, and the fever of vanity and ambition is gradually subsiding into a healthful state of moderation and contentment. Of the personal character of the King, he abstained from saying much—observing only, that whatever might be the measures of his

ministers, no candid man could impeach the purity of his intentions—that he was a peaceful Monarch, which was what France wanted at this moment more than any other qualification, and that this character would insure the affections of his people, and the stability of his throne. You will naturally say, that this is but the opinion of an individual, and can only be estimated as such. But recollect the constant collision of sentiment in this country; every man, woman, and child, is here a politician; they are continually conversing on the subject, and one decided voice may, in most cases, be considered as the organ of the multitude.

It surprised me to find Cambrai so dull—notwithstanding the number of gay young British Officers who are here, not even a theatre is open, nor any other place of public amusement. This is attributable, in great measure, to a want of cordiality between the army and inhabitants; for al-

though there have not been any serious grounds for reciprocal complaint, there has been no disposition on either side to cultivate an intimacy, or maintain any intercourse which could be properly avoided. But could it have been expected, that Frenchmen were to make themselves agreeable to that army, which had inflicted upon their vanity the deepest wound it ever had received, and which was reminding them every hour of their humiliation and defeat. No—of this I am persuaded, that there is no native of this country, be his politics what they may, who does not burn with indignation at the presence of the allied troops; and anticipate with delight the day of their departure. As might be naturally expected, our army would be well pleased to prolong their visit; and they think the Sovereigns and Ambassadors at Congress have acted most indiscreetly in sending them away. But they console themselves with a confi-

dent hope, that peace will not be permanent, as they think that it has been hitherto due to their intimidating presence; and many of our officers would advise the ministry not to venture upon the reduction of a single regiment, till the experience of at least twelve months should justify the measure; even then there are those who think it would be hazardous in the extreme.

LETTER III.

Valenciennes, October, 1818.

THERE being no inducement to remain at Cambrai, I left it for Valenciennes on the eighteenth, three days previous to the review, as had been fixed; but on my arrival I found it was postponed to the twenty-third. This was not known in time to prevent such a concourse of people from assembling in the town, that with difficulty a bed could be procured. After driving to two hotels I succeeded in getting one in a closet, for which I was to pay about a *franc* a foot. There was space for a small

table, chair, and myself to stand in, not without some exercise of ingenuity. The inconvenience of this was however compensated by a ludicrous occurrence. I must premise, that I occupied the bed of a young waiter of the hotel. About four o'clock in the morning I was awakened by a gentle push, and heard in a sepulchral voice, *Lubin, mon cher Lubin.* I started up, and, standing beside me, beheld—an old cook maid, with a glimmering lamp in her hand, who reminded me of Leonarda in the cave with Gil Blas. On discovering her mistake she screamed like a screech owl and retreated. At breakfast I was attended by a lively young female, and I could not resist informing her of what had happened. She laughed immoderately, ran into the kitchen, repeated the adventure with many exaggerations, and, in succession, every servant came into the room and greeted me with the appellation of *Lubin, mon cher Lubin.* This was enough

to banish me from the house; the old cook would have poisoned me had I remained, and I might have suffered from the resentment of the young waiter, as it is probable that he was laughed at even more than I was.

The town of Valenciennes has little to attract the attention of a traveller; but the environs are pretty, and the walks upon the ramparts, being kept in the neatest order, are much to be admired. Within the works, here as at Cambrai, our troops are encamped; the effect of this is highly picturesque, and, from many associations, most gratifying to an English eye. The fortifications, which were materially injured in seventeen hundred and ninety-three, are now undergoing a complete repair; and to a person unacquainted with such matters, it seems astonishing that they should ever have been attempted, and impossible that they should be taken. But what will not British skill and enterprise effect?

Beyond them, at a little distance, is the burial ground of the town. The monuments of the English are in the simplest style, with a mere record of the name, the age, and regiment of the deceased. Those of the French are all surmounted with a cross and a painting of the crucifixion. Under the usual epitaph are the words—"*Un de Profundis, s'il vous plait.*" The familiar phraseology of which, upon so solemn an occasion, at once offended me and characterised the people.

In the *Hotel de Ville* there are a few good paintings, and some prints of remarkably large sturgeons, which were taken in the river here, one of which is stated to have weighed two hundred and fifty pounds. The *Grand Place* is spacious, yet it scarcely contains the numbers whom curiosity and conversation attract at all hours of the day. Here are the principal coffee-houses, which are filled from morning till night, every in-

dividual with a pipe or segar in his mouth. The practice of smoking has become so prevalent, that the very air is infected with tobacco; and it is much to be feared that many a young man will return to his native country with no other evidence of having lived so long in France, but this deleterious and offensive custom.

Preparations are making upon a very handsome scale for the dinners which are to be given by the Duke of Wellington, for three days, to the Sovereigns and their suites. It is not true, as you may have read in the newspapers, that a tent is fitted up, in which three hundred are to dine; it is merely for the reception of the company. In the centre the colours of the five nations are suspended; England, Austria, Russia, Prussia, and France, decorated with branches of laurel, and different evergreens on the ground in boxes. From this you pass into a rotunda, in the area of which is a dinner-table, and thence

into a room about forty-five feet square, in which their Majesties, and persons of the highest distinction, are to dine with the Duke. Covers are laid for a hundred and twenty, and it is thought there will not be so many at the tables. The rooms belong to the town, and were built for balls and concerts.

During the entire of this morning all has been anxiety for the arrival of their Majesties; between three and four the King of Prussia and his son, and the Prince of Orange, arrived; but the grand object of universal expectation, the Emperor Alexander, did not come till seven. It was imagined that they would all attend the theatre, which was in consequence uncommonly crouded, and they did, with the exception of the Emperor. Every time the Duke of Wellington's box was opened, where his Majesty was to have sat, the whole house stood up, and were as often disappointed. The King

of Prussia was in a small box on the stage, and could not be seen by any but those who were directly opposite to him. I happened to be one of them. Whether his countenance was more "in sorrow than in anger," I will not venture to pronounce; but certainly it was any thing but cheerful, and the whole of his demeanour and reception within and without the theatre testified what was before sufficiently known, that there was no love lost between his Majesty and the French. In contrast to this sombre air, I could not resist placing the happy and enviable gaiety of the Duke of Wellington. He went to different parts of the house, spoke with a smile to every one he addressed, and seemed to be exhilarated at the completion of the glorious work he had achieved. It was indeed to me a most gratifying sight to behold my countryman surrounded by Princes whose wrongs he had avenged, and by a people for whom he had won the blessings

of good government, and restored to their long lost prosperity and peace. But upon this subject I confess myself enthusiastic, and I must check my pen.

So humble an individual as myself could not expect to be invited to the dinners, nor did I seek it. I have made it a rule through life to treat my vanity with parental tenderness, and therefore I subject it to as few mortifications as I can. But I had the pleasure of dining at an excellent *table d'hote*, where I met and conversed with agreeable and well-informed men of different countries. It was entertaining to hear their opinions of the approaching evacuation. They were almost all military, and all these condemned it: but the few civilians were of an opposite opinion, and considered it the only measure that was now wanted to reconcile the French with the existing order of things, and to deprive the discontented of their most serious & formidable grievance. A German observed

to me, that our army was the most enviable body upon earth, because they were returning to England. He had been there eight months, and expressed his astonishment, that any Englishman should voluntarily leave his own country, where every thing was in such perfection. I then remarked, that if personal comfort were the only consideration I could readily agree with him, but that superior motives induced us to travel; there was much to be seen and learned on the Continent—and if it taught us nothing else, we came back with an increased veneration and love for the laws and liberties of the land we lived in. "Alas, Sir," said he, "you have touched the point I had principally in view. Surely it is not possible that any man who has travelled much could be disloyal to the government of England. Your tranquillity, I know, is sometimes disturbed by popular effervescence; but it is at once the cause and the effect of your freedom, the only

mischievous abuse of which is the frequency of libels that disgrace your press; and these, I was informed, proceeded in most cases from malignant or mercenary motives. Your taxes are indisputably heavy; I consider them, however, as a cheap purchase for the blessings you enjoy, and look forward with solicitude to the day when I shall pay my part of them."

The sentiments of this foreigner accorded so completely with my own, that I had only to bow assent, and to thank him for his flattering eulogium. We parted with mutual expressions of regret, and desire to renew our acquaintance at no distant period.

LETTER IV

Valenciennes, October, 1818.

ON the morning appointed for the inspection of the Russian troops, previous to the general review, the streets were filled with hundreds of the inhabitants, hastening to the Emperor's hotel, anxious to behold him, and exclaiming when they did, *Vive Alexander, Vive L'Empereur.* Nothing can exceed his popularity in France, and it appeared to me, that his Majesty was not indifferent to it, as he returned the numerous salutes with the most gracious and affable condescension. He has engrossed the affec-

tions of the people: their feelings towards the King of Prussia I have already mentioned; and I perceive, that the Duke of Wellington's is a name which they never wish to hear pronounced. At different times I have endeavoured to collect their sentiments of His Grace, and never have succeeded; they avoided the conversation as upon a painful and humiliating topic; they called him, *Votre* Wellington, shrugged their shoulders, took snuff, and spoke of some one else. Upon reflection, I thought it ungenerous to urge them upon this subject; but their unwillingness to have even the name repeated speaks volumes of itself.

The appearance of the Russians was matter of astonishment to every spectator. Their appointments and their discipline were equally admirable—the charges of their cavalry particularly fine, and their artillery in the highest state of perfection. It is admitted, that they have been improved

beyond all expectation during their residence in France and intercourse with our army; and as their Commissariat department has been ameliorated in a similar degree, there can be no question of their capability to take the field against any force that Europe can produce.

But the grand review of this day was indeed a truly glorious and delightful exhibition. The troops, nearly sixty thousand in number, occupied a space of about twelve miles; and, after a sham battle of the most eventful and interesting nature, which continued from ten till four, they marched in line before the Sovereigns and Duke, displaying such an assemblage of beauty and regularity as might have been equalled by themselves upon a former occasion, but never could have been surpassed. If there are any in this kingdom whose "sentence is for open war," I could have wished them to be present at the review, for there were argu-

ments upon the field for pacific dispositions which would plead more powerfully than any that the wit of man could possibly devise. It did produce a sensible effect upon the numerous Frenchmen who were there—a hurried exclamation of reluctant praise and wonder was every where to be heard; and it may be safely said, that if the council of war were to sit at Valenciennes, the temple of Janus would not be opened for the remainder of their lives.

On my return from this splendid sight I was accompanied by an old Frenchman, at whose house I lodged. After expressing his admiration and astonishment, he remarked with a sardonic smile, that this was a proud day for Bonaparte. I was at loss to understand his meaning, when he continued—the Sovereigns are magnanimous—your General the greatest Captain of the age—the Armies, the finest the world ever saw—and yet are they so much afraid of

that one man, that they chain him upon a barren rock least he should defeat them all. This came upon me so suddenly, that it was some minutes before I could collect myself for a reply—but I soon informed him, he was mistaken if he thought that fear of Bonaparte had any share in the motives which led to his exile and detention at St. Helena: that the troops, which had beaten him before, were in a better condition to do so now than they had been then; but that regard for the tranquillity of the world, of which, were he at liberty, he could not cease to be the disturber, was the real cause of his confinement, and at the same time its fullest justification. He said, that he had often heard this argument, and that at one time it might have had some force; but that now he thought the wisest thing the King of France could do would be to interest himself with the Potentates of Europe to obtain the liberation of Napoleon—it

would argue a confidence in the attachment of his people, and deprive the friends of the banished Emperor of all they had to say in his behalf. From this I doubted, whether my host was a decided Bonapartist or not; when he proceeded to say, there was a period when I and almost every Frenchman idolised the name of Napoleon; there was no sacrifice we thought too great when he was extending his conquests for the glory of the nation, and that France was the envy and the terror of the world; but when we found that his real and secret object was the aggrandisement of his family—that our children were to be torn from us, our commerce annihilated, and all our resources lavished, to place his brothers upon the thrones he had usurped—then the mask fell off, his genuine character was displayed, and he lost, irrecoverably, the affections of the French. No, said he, whatever may be the fate of that extraordinary man, believe me, he never will

attempt again to sit upon the throne of France; he knows the hold he had upon our hearts is gone, and if he had not been thoroughly convinced of this he never would have surrendered himself a prisoner to the English. Plausible as this reasoning might be, I could not concur entirely with my friend, nor could I controvert it. I therefore contented myself with saying, that if he wished to go to Paris, free of expense, he had only to state his opinions to the Governor of the town, when our army was removed, and I had little doubt of his being conveyed there speedily, as Rabelais contrived it by his celebrated prescriptions for the Royal Family. He laughed, and said he should have plenty of companions, for he spoke the sentiments of three-fourths of his acquaintance.

I had the honour of an invitation to the Duke of Wellington's ball in the evening; it was given in the theatre, and was as

magnificent as you can imagine: so many Monarchs and Princes, and Generals, with their brilliant decorations, will probably never be again assembled, at least upon a similar occasion. The ladies were dressed with taste and elegance, but without much splendour; and, with the exception of one Frenchwoman and one American, all the beauty that I saw was English. The crowd was so immense, that the waltzes and quadrilles were executed with difficulty, and with still greater the Polonaise, which is at once a melancholy and laughable promenade. After this the company began to disperse, and as the amusements of the day were not unattended by fatigue you will allow me to repose.

LETTER V.

Brussels, October, 1818.

EVERY thing of interest connected with the British army was now at an end; before their departure it was gratifying to learn that, although they may be feared and hated as an enemy by the French, they will leave behind them the most favourable impressions of their private character, and therefore it may be reasonably presumed, that whatever are the feelings of the lower orders, amongst the more enlightened, the ancient national antipathy has subsided.

At Mons, the only town of importance on the road to Brussels, the fortifications are extending to a great distance beyond their former limits. It is calculated that the projected works will not be finished in less than ten years, and for their completion no trifling contributions are levied upon the inhabitants of Belgium. With this they are exceedingly dissatisfied; but the King of the Netherlands is wisely determined to preserve, if possible, the valuable accession of territory he has obtained. His new subjects have ever been remarkable for being difficult to please, and he came to the throne, no doubt, prepared for popular discontent.

To say much of Waterloo, after all that has been written in prose and verse, would be presumptuous; and yet, is it possible to have passed over its plains without adding one more tribute to the glories of the day, which have immortalised its name. The peasants point with precision to the very

spot where many of our heroes fell, recount their memorable exploits, and describe the various incidents of that extraordinary combat, with an exactness which "fights the battle o'er again." It is however to be lamented, that no general monument has been erected to commemorate such a matchless victory. There is one for the Prussians who fell in action—another is nearly finished for the Hanoverians—for the British there is none upon the field, but that to the rare merits of Sir Alexander Gordon, which is affectingly conspicuous. True it is, there are many records of individuals in the small church of Waterloo; but the place is perfectly unsuitable. I would perpetuate the memory of my brave countrymen upon the ground which is enriched by their blood; and there should be one sacred space, which the unfeeling plough should never be permitted to pass over again. It may be now too late, but there was a time, when every man in the

United Kingdom would have had a melancholy pleasure in contributing to the last honor the breathless soldier could receive.

" His saltem accumulem donis et fungar inani
Munere."

I had heard such extravagant accounts of the beauty of Brussels, that I was prepared for disappointment. The upper part of the town cannot be extolled too much; the park, and the houses which surround it, unite the advantages of town and country in the happiest combination, and taste and neatness every where prevail. The lower part, in which are the principal shops, the markets, the theatre, and all the public offices, is just as remarkable for dirt and deformity, and a more insalubrious residence is rarely to be found. The King has, however, adopted the most efficacious means for remedying this latter inconvenience by having a part of the ancient walls and ramparts thrown down, to the height and proximity

of which the unhealthiness of the place was chiefly to be ascribed. A spacious theatre is in progress, and a Royal Palace is to be built in the immediate vicinity of the lower town, where the ramparts are removing.—The benefits of a resident government, although not appreciated as they ought at present, will thus be gradually felt, and, it is hoped, acknowledged by a grateful people.

The gallery of pictures is here upon a splendid scale, and in numbers and excellence surpasses every thing of the kind I have hitherto seen. Many of the paintings which were most admired at the Louvre had been taken from and are restored to Brussels. It is surprising that they did not suffer in the smallest degree; the only injury they sustained was an injudicious varnishing inflicted upon some of them. In the same building the library and cabinet of natural history are well worthy of inspection, and within the walls of this ancient palace, for

such it was, many a morning might be agreeably and profitably employed.

The churches are every where an object of my most anxious curiosity, as indeed they ought to be to all travellers; for in them the finest specimens of architecture, statuary, and painting are to be found. The Cathedral, or church of *St. Gudule*, presents the amplest gratification to the lovers of these three fine arts. I will not enter into the minuteness of description, but would particularly direct your attention to the pulpit of oak—the workmanship of which is, I believe, the most exquisite of the kind that the hand of the carver ever has produced. Whilst I was examining the various wonders of this venerable building, a well dressed man accosted me, and after a little conversation expressed his astonishment at my speaking French so fluently,—that I must be a *Russian, as he had never heard an

*The Russians are remarkable for speaking French well.

Englishman with so good an accent. For a moment I was thrown off my guard,—for what mortal is inaccessible to flattery,—and he requested me to walk into a side aisle, that he might point out some peculiar beauties. This I declined, and he solicited some small donation, declaring, that although his clothes were good, he wore them merely, *pour l'amour de Dieu*, to enable him to appear with decency at church, and that he had not wherewithal to buy his breakfast. My merits as a linguist were now accounted for: I told him, I had seen too much of the world for such experiments, and took upon me to assure him, that his prayers would be as acceptable in the shabbiest as in the finest coat. Of this it was impossible to convince him, and he continued to importune me with all the eloquence of an accomplished mendicant. If I say that I yielded, you will smile at my simplicity; and if that I remained obdurate, you may condemn my

cruelty; so the secret shall be kept even from the most discreet and intimate of my female friends.

There are about two thousand English settled in the town, and the King has obliged them with the use of two churches. At first, it was intended to have but one place of worship and one clergyman; but there were two candidates for the appointment, each so powerfully supported, that an arrangement was made to compromise the contest and provide for them both. One of these gentlemen keeps a classical school, to the great accommodation of his countrymen, and is such an admirable preacher, that he attracts a crowded congregation every Sunday. Of the other I also heard a very favourable report.

The drive from Brussels to Lacken is so delightful, that every one should see the palace of Schonenberg, which has otherwise not much to recommend it. A comfortable

well-furnished house it certainly is; but as a residence for royalty, quite of a secondary order, having nothing of a distinguished character but some fine tapestry and a magnificent room for music. The grounds and gardens are laid out with taste, and the surrounding scenery is rich and beautiful in the extreme. The King is said to have a particular predilection for the place, and it is expected that he will pass the ensuing summer there.

If I were asked what struck me as most extraordinary at Brussels, I should not hesitate to reply, the deformity of the people. Neither in the park, the theatre, nor the streets, had I the good fortune to meet with one person who had the smallest pretensions to personal attraction. The physiognomist may be able to account for this,—perhaps it may arise from the various changes the country has undergone; Spaniards, Austrians, French, Dutch, successively its masters,—and the

present generation a strange and ugly composition of them all. Not that the Dutch can be fairly included in the group, unless by anticipation, but the most enthusiastic of their admirers can scarcely hope they will improve the beauty of the inhabitants, whatever other advantages they may confer upon the town. I had almost forgotten, that there is one lady here distinguished by the appellation of *La belle Anglaise;* but it was at Brussels she received it.

LETTER VI.

Brussels, October, 1818.

As this town has been the favorite foreign residence of the English, I was naturally desirous to inquire into the circumstances which constituted its attraction; and I believe they consist partly in the beauty of the situation, but principally in the cheapness with which a family can be maintained and educated here. From a close calculation, it appeared to me, that this might be done for one third of the expence in any English town, which offered the advantages of amusement and instruction, where the

society was agreeable and the masters good. These latter considerations are frequently lost sight of in the comparative estimates of at home and abroad; but then, the question is unfairly argued—you certainly can exist as economically in a village in Yorkshire as in Brussels; but you could not live in Bath for three times the sum, with equal accommodation and enjoyment. Brussels is not deficient in any of the attributes, which characterise the capital of a kingdom; whilst at the same time the rural charms of the park present a ready retirement from the bustle of the town, and you may escape from the crowd as often as you please. In addition to this, the lover of literature and the fine arts has here unbounded sources of gratification, so that upon the whole I would venture to assert, that Europe does not afford a more desirable situation than the town of Brussels for an English gentleman, who has determined to expatriate himself, whose

income is limited and whose family is large. It is true, that individuals have been disappointed in the experiment; but in most cases the fault was in themselves; they drew precipitate and "foregone conclusions"—they adhered to their national habits and inclinations, and by verifying the assertion of the poet, "*Cœlum non animum mutant, qui trans mare currunt*," became incapable of deriving the advantages, which a more patient residence and a more accommodating disposition could not fail to have insured them.

I am aware that emigration has been discouraged by some judicious and experienced travellers, who have written upon the subject, and that the value of the inducements I have enumerated has been depreciated so much as to determine many to remain at home. The question of economy is, I believe, admitted, if you continue a sufficiently long time abroad; for there can be no doubt, that the savings upon an excursion

for a few months will not defray the inevitable charges of the road. But let a fair trial of at least two years be given, and my position will be established by your purse; every month your disbursements will decrease, as your acquaintance with the country, its prices, and commodities improves. Frugality may be an English virtue; but no where is the art of living, even luxuriously, upon slender means, so perfectly understood and practised as upon the Continent of Europe.

But a much more formidable objection remains to be removed—the injury which may be done to the morals of young people by associating with unprincipled foreigners. If this could be maintained, the subject would be set entirely at rest, for no consideration could outweigh such an irreparable evil. It strikes me, however, in a far different point of view. Let me institute a comparison again between Bath and Brussels, and I will be bold to say, that innocence is more out-

raged, and modesty more insulted, in one month in the former than in twelve in the latter. The most particular pains are taken upon the Continent to prevent the youthful eye or ear from being shocked by improprieties, either public or private. Let the frequenters of our fashionable streets, and theatres, and assemblies declare, whether this can be asserted with equal truth of any considerable town in England. No, the reverse is a lamentable and glaring discredit to our country, where it is scarcely possible, at least, for mental purity to be preserved immaculate But, abroad, whatever vices may exist, they have to plead the palliation of being inobtrusive, not from any hypocritical concealment, but from a happily conceived principle of delicacy and politeness, and a proper subordination to a well-regulated police; it is therefore my conviction, that the apprehensions upon this head, if not totally unfounded, have been highly over-

rated, and that it requires but the ordinary precautions of parental prudence to guard against the only dangers which actually exist.

I have already mentioned to you that the King of the Netherlands is not popular amongst the Belgians; they avow pretty generally their preference of submitting to an Austrian, a French, or even an English yoke, to incorporation with the Dutch; they have a deeply-rooted antipathy to Holland, and their jealousy was fomented by the first formation of the United States General. In the election of members, as their population was the greater of the two, they confidently expected to have a majority in the Assembly; but his Majesty determined that the representatives should be regulated by the number of provinces, and as Holland contained three more than Belgium, she has the power of outvoting whenever a collision of interests shall arise. They pretend at Brussels that the prosperity of the inferior has

already been sacrificed to that of the superior force. One instance of partiality was rung repeatedly in my ears. Before the union, Belgium could consume but one-third of her annual produce, such is the exuberance of her soil; there were always three years provision in store to guard against any casualty which might befal their crops, and the remainder was exported, to the great benefit of the agricultural community. But now this surplus goes to Holland, which has all the commercial advantages arising from such a lucrative article of trade, whilst the Belgian granaries are empty, and their farmers poor.

Upon minute inquiry I found this statement to be very much exaggerated—resulting from narrow views and an unenlightened policy. The King can have no object but the general prosperity of his dominions at large; and if partial sacrifices are sometimes required, they will ultimately redound to the advantage of the whole.

Another of the grievances reported to me was of a still more curious nature—that his Majesty, upon coming to the throne, insisted upon all public business being transacted, and even the speeches in the Assembly of the States General being delivered in the language of Holland, although few of the Belgians speak any thing but French, which is now nearly considered their aboriginal tongue. Upon a remonstrance of the difficulty, if not the impossibility of complying with this order, a compromise was conceded, demanding a duplicate of every official paper to be preserved, one in French and another in Dutch; and thus the dispute was amicably settled. When I heard of this, it reminded me of a wish expressed by a friend of mine, soon after the union between Great Britain and Ireland, that some of the representatives of the latter should be permitted and others compelled to speak in the native language of their country, as highly

conducive to the despatch of business, and to the tranquillity of the Empire. It may be amusing to apply this criterion to our Parliamentary debates in future, and to ascertain what proportion of them one would desire to have been spoken in an unintelligible tongue.

I have stated the fact of the King's being unpopular, to redeem my pledge of impartiality, without attaching to it any importance myself. I consider the majority of the complaints I heard as the ignorant murmurs of a capricious multitude, convinced that the experience of a few years will silence the discontented; their manufactures and trade, which have of late years suffered so severely, will once more flourish; their linens, their laces, and their carpets; will again be celebrated in the commercial world; the industry and perseverance of the Dutch will stimulate their exertions, and, under the protection of one common King,

Belgium will have reason to congratulate herself upon the day which united her fortunes to such a State as Holland.

It is but candid to mention, that the Prince of Orange partakes in no degree the unpopularity of his father; on the contrary, he is universally beloved and admired. There is a conciliating cheerfulness in his manners, well calculated to attract and secure the affections of every one who approaches him. It must be admitted, at the same time, that, independently of his personal merits, his connexion with Russia may contribute materially to make the Belgians regard him with fond anticipation, as their future King.

LETTER VII.

Aix-la-Chapelle, October, 1813.

IT was not without the most painful sensations of regret that I took leave of Brussels, having met there some of my oldest and most attached friends, from whom I received unbounded kindness. If this be at all times agreeable, it is doubly so in a foreign land; the recollections it awakens, associated with home, have always been to me, beyond description, sweet; but perhaps my concern was increased by the conveyance which transported me. Reluctantly am I obliged to withdraw my commendation from the

lately lauded *Diligences;* such ingenious torture, such an agonising slow death never was contrived, even by inquisitorial cruelty. Again and again I exclaimed, to the no small amusement of my fellow travellers, if it should ever be intended to embitter the destiny of Buonaparte, let the remainder of his days be passed in this vehicle to Liege, and the most implacable of his enemies will be satiated with vengeance. It proceeded at the rate of about two miles and a half an hour; eleven persons were incarcerated with me, every one of whom had a pipe or segar incessantly in his mouth. At the expiration of eighteen hours, stupified and fumigated, I was tumbled out like a bale of tobacco and relieved from my misery.

It might have been the state of my temper, not the most harmonious, you will readily believe, but I thought the suburbs of Liege were dirtier than those of any town in Ireland, and the squalid appearance of the

inhabitants fully corresponded with the condition of the streets. On advancing, however, it improved, and were it not for the still visible devastations of the French, was not destitute of beauty. They are now busily employed in removing the rubbish of the ruins of their fine Cathedral, without any intention of rebuilding it. Fortifications are considered more estimable and important than Churches; accordingly the Works are receiving a perfect renovation, and are to be projected at least a mile beyond their former boundaries. From the Citadel, which I was permitted by an officer to ascend under the *surveillance* of a soldier, the view is of the most extensive, varied, and delightful description. Hills rising upon hills in graceful majesty, luxuriantly wooded, yet not so thickly as to conceal the smiling and cultivated vallies; present such a landscape as I had languished for in vain, since I took leave of England. There wanted but

the neat cottage and the spiral smoke to make the scenery perfectly picturesque. It is, notwithstanding, of a most enchanting character, and amply compensates for the toil of climbing up the steep mountain, on which the Citadel is placed. In the morning I travelled through much of the country that had gratified me so highly, and the environs redeemed the reputation of Liege. Taste and cleanliness were conspicuous, the houses and gardens singularly neat, the people well dressed, and the contrast altogether with the other outlet of the town unaccountably remarkable.

My admiration was soon interrupted by the cries of children running beside the carriage and asking for charity. One chubby little rogue, of about ten years old, outstepped his fellows, and for a quarter of an hour endeavoured to recommend himself by exclaiming, *Vivent les Francois, Vivent les Anglois, Vive Napoleon, Vivent les Cossaques.*

You may imagine how I was amused by the dexterous versatility of this youthful mendicant; he took chance for the politics and nation of the traveller, and as they say at fairs, had spectacles for all ages. The humour of it was to me quite irresistible, and I rewarded his ingenuity by the donation of a *Franc*, to his no small transport and astonishment. What pity, that he should not receive a regular education! for with his talents and dispositions he could not fail in time to make an admirable statesman.

Before I left Liege, I had the satisfaction of seeing the Emperor Alexander once more: he was returning from Paris, where he had paid his congratulatory visit to the King of France. Here, as at Valenciennes, he was greeted with the most enthusiastic demonstrations of joy. The windows were filled by well dressed females; the streets, by the entire male population of the town. The air was rent with reiterated shouts of

Vive Alexander, Vive le bon Empereur, where possibly, and I would fain hope, "more was meant than met the ear." His Majesty returned innumerable salutations in his customary way, by touching the side of his hat with the fore finger of his right hand.—Indeed, no one but a *Mandarin* could have bowed acknowledgment for the thousand compliments he received. The complacency of his smile was recompence for them all.

I arrived at Aix-la-Chapelle soon after ten o'clock at night, and, will you believe it, all was darkness and stilness in the streets; not an individual to be seen; the whole wearing the appearance of a deserted and depopulated town. It did not surprise me to find the first hotel I drove to full; but it did, that the second was shut up at such an early hour, the family and waiters had retired to rest, and not till after repeated knocking at the door; admission was obtained. In a place where the concentered charms of Europe

were asserted in London to have erected their throne, I should have conjectured that sleep was almost banished; and although the hours of amusement upon the continent are earlier than with us, my astonishment was great at the universal slumber, which seemed to sit upon the eyelids of the town. In the morning I soon ascertained that the representations I had read of the immense concourse of people assembled here were utterly untrue. Upon very many of the houses, bills for lodgings were posted, and good accommodation was to be had, circumstances considered, at a reasonable rate. Many were, no doubt, deterred from coming here by the reported difficulty of procuring apartments, and the consequently presumed expense. Too much might have been at first demanded, and the inhabitants have justly suffered by their attempt at extortion.

If I was astonished by the tranquillity of the night, I was still more so by the dul-

ness of the day. Few equipages or pedestrians in the streets; few places of public entertainment open, and a considerably less air of gaiety, or business, than in any town that I had passed through, which was worth notice, since my departure from Calais.—The *Rue de Compesbad*, which has been vaunted so extravagantly, is not half so wide as Charing-Cross, resembling it in form, and very little longer. It owes its reputation to the principal hotels, the best baths, and, above all, the *Redoute* being situated there. This latter is a spacious building, consisting of very handsome rooms, in which the concerts and assemblies are held; and, what I fear constitutes at present its most powerful attraction, it is the scene of almost uninterrupted gambling from morning till night. Numerous parties of men and women frequent it in the evening, and partake of suppers and a variety of refreshments.—The theatre is so small as to be undeserving

of specification, but for an excellent company of German comedians. It amused me much to hear one of our humorous songs, I cannot say which nation has the merit of the original composition, where an apothecary of all trades prescribes for his patient a packet of his best shaving powder. Here it was given with a most ludicrous effect, and kept the house in uninterrupted roars of laughter, the conclusion of each verse, descriptive of the blunders, was nearly as pronounced, "and dat vas weray gude." The other places of entertainment or exhibition are contemptibly poor, and but for the matchless melodies of Catalani, and a little good instrumental music, the public are absolutely without amusement to beguile the hours, and the pillow is courted as a refuge from *ennui*.

But the coffee-houses in great measure supply the deficiency of professional performers, containing as they do a superabundance of moral, metaphysical, and poli-

tical mountebanks. Every man you speak to has a scheme in his pocket or a system in his brain, and they are all transacting the business of the Congress with admirable celerity and skill. To their great mortification and surprise they have not yet been consulted by any of the Ministers, and they are suffered to remain in the most pitiable ignorance of what is actually doing. They know, however, completely well what ought to be done, and if ever there was an approximation to the perfectibility of the human species, it is at this moment in the projects of the wise and philanthropic speculators at Aix-la-Chapelle.

LETTER VIII.

Aix-la-Chapelle, November, 1818.

MUCH as I may feel myself disappointed in the expectations I had fondly formed of every thing to be met with here, it is not possible for the town, which was the cradle and the grave of Charlemagne, to be devoid of interest. You may be sure, that I sought with solicitude for every trace and recollection of that illustrious Prince. He was born in the *Hotel de Ville,* which had been a Royal Palace until the fourteenth century. It is a spacious gothic building, with little architectural beauty to boast; but in

the different apartments, there are some very old and curious paintings; one of the most modern, upon an extensive scale, of the congress in 1748, with likenesses of the assembled Embassadors: there are also, in the same room, separate portraits of them all, which are represented to be striking resemblances.

Much more beautiful and attractive is the celebrated church, in which the remains of Charlemagne were deposited, under a singularly large flag in the center, with the simple but sufficient inscription of CAROLO MAGNO. The throne or chair of state, which was his, and that of many succeeding Monarchs is here carefully preserved in a case of oak and exhibited as an interesting curiosity. It is of white marble on a pedestal with six steps, in form like a modern arm chair—and the only injury it has sustained from time is the loss of a profusion of gilded decorations, which to the eye of

taste can easily be spared. In the gallery of the great dome, there are many excellent paintings, particularly two superb ones by Rubens—the Nativity and the Descent from the Cross. They had embellished the walls of the Louvre and were restored, happily without having been subjected to the hand of the varnisher, like those I had seen at Brussels. Here are also two pieces on wood by Albert Durer, suspended on hinges and painted on both sides, and another of his, representing what is denominated, the *great treasure;* the gift of Charlemagne, which is publicly displayed to the faithful, every seven years, for fifteen days. It consists of pretended relics of our Saviour's and the Virgin's garments, Aaron's rod, the Manna of the Wilderness, the cloth on which John the Baptist was beheaded, and others of the same antiquity and character. This treasure was formerly so revered as to attract an immense concourse of the devout to Aix-la-

Chapelle from all parts of Europe; insomuch that in the year 1492 there were 142,000 visitors, and at the conclusion of the ceremony eighty thousand golden Florins were found in the chest, as the offerings of the faithful. The church was originally built by Charlemagne, between the years 796 and 804. In the decoration of it, gold and silver, and bronze were magnificently lavished. It was consecrated by Pope Leo the Third, and the following fact is seriously recorded, and was for ages religiously believed. Three hundred and sixty five Archbishops and Bishops were summoned to assist his Holiness; two of them were unable to attend, but suddenly, two Bishops of *Tongres*, who had been long before dead, and were buried at *Maestricht*, appeared and assisted at the ceremony,—and they vanished, as suddenly, when the benediction was pronounced. Such superstitious credulity is no longer current upon the Continent.

It was in vain I enquired after the magnificent baths of the Palace, in which, it is recorded, above one hundred persons could swim at the same time, and where Charlemagne was accustomed to amuse himself with his children, and occasionally with the officers, and even the soldiers of his guard. There is no trace of them to be found, corresponding to the description. But I need not inform you, that the town is rich in mineral waters, sulphureous and chalybeate; hot and cold springs, and their salubrious efficacy has, for ages, been eminently extolled.

It may not be disagreeable to you to have a sketch of the history of Aix-la-Chapelle, occupying, as it has done, so important a place in the transactions of Europe. It is of such high antiquity, that *Ptolemy* has mentioned it, under the name of *Veterra.* There are fabulous accounts of *Granus,* a Roman, who first discovered its celebrated

springs, and established himself there in consequence; but it is certain, that it was known in the time of *Cæsar* and *Drusus*, of which abundant proofs have been frequently afforded by the discovery of medals in cleansing and reparing the imperial fountain. The opinion of these, who maintain that Charlemagne was the first that discovered the springs, and that he was the founder of the town is altogether erroneous. Here he was born in 742, and that was the motive of his attachment to the place, which he declared the second city of his great empire, as appears by the inscription over the gate of his Palace, "*Hic sedes regni trans Alpes habeatur, caput omnium prorinciarum et civitatum Galliæ.*" This great Emperor died in 842, in his native town. The *Normans*, who came there in 882, laid it waste. Henry the First restored it in a considerable degree, but to *Otho* the Third it was indebted for the most substantial benefits. Subsequent Emperors

conferred upon it such privileges, as amounted almost to independence. After those of the *Carlovingian* race, and of the houses of Saxony, Franconia, Suabia, Habsbourg, and Luxembourg, had been for the most part crowned at Aix-la-Chapelle, a positive law was promulgated by Charles the Fourth, inserted in the *Golden Bull*, that in future, it should be the place of coronation for the Emperors of Germany.

It cannot be necessary to remind you of the other circumstances, which have contributed to the celebrity of this town, such as the treaties of peace that were concluded here in 1668, between France and Spain, and in 1748, between England, France, and the Low Countries; but its prosperity was materially interrupted, if not entirely destroyed in the seventeenth century. In 1614, *Spinola* adopted the violent measures which banished from it the most opulent Protestant families, who fled for refuge, and carried

with them their wealth and industry to Holland. Internal dissentions, the consequence of bad government, accelerated the decline of this ancient town, which had been once so flourishing, and which can never recover, even under the most auspicious circumstances, the distinguished rank it once possessed in Europe. The present assemblage of the Congress must enrich many of the inhabitants, but the effect of this is temporary and partial.

I was irresistibly led, while walking through the town, to institute a comparison between Buonaparte and his great prototype and predecessor, Charlemagne; for that the fallen French Emperor formed himself upon the model of that truly-great man, no one, who is acquainted with the history of both, can doubt. There was an equal aviditity of conquest—the same success of arms; but the ambition of the one was limited, while that of the other was unbounded. They had each

the honour of Papal coronation, were alike magnificent in their courts, and were the terror of the world, whose highest distinctions they had won by war. But Charlemagne was born to a crown, and he knew where to stop; he delighted in the pleasures of domestic life, cultivated the arts of peace, and condescended to the most innocent and amiable pursuits, having principally in view the happiness of his family and of his subjects. The contrast which might be drawn, is too recent in recollection to require you to look upon the other side of the picture; and the fate of the two individuals is the best comment upon the widely-different paths they pursued. What an instructive lesson does it afford to all surviving monarchs!

LETTER IX.

Aix-la-Chapelle, November, 1815.

YOU will not suspect me of the stupidity of declining the conversation of the coffee-house politicians, ridiculous as for the greater part it certainly has been; and I have been the rather induced to join in it from having met there an agreeable Dutchman, from whom I had received the kindest attentions some years since, during a short residence in Holland. He continued to be what I then knew him—a most ardent admirer of Buonaparte; and from him I heard, with every assurance of probability, the pro-

posed liberation of his hero from St. Helena, and the projected transfer of the custody of his person to the Emperor Alexander. In discussing the justice and propriety of this arrangement, he dwelt with warmth upon the unnecessary and wanton severity with which the exile had been treated from the beginning; insisted that we had entrapped him in the most ungenerous and dishonourable manner; that to detain him was contrary to the Law of Nations, being utterly unprecedented; and to deny him the dignity of his Imperial title, an unbecoming insult upon departed greatness. It was, indeed, useless for me to argue the absurdity of any just claim upon the honour of England, from the notorious fact of Buonaparte's attempted escape to America, and his surrender to a British man of war, without stipulation on the part of the commander, being merely a *pis-aller* to save himself from the certain destruction of falling into the hands of the

French government. If that country, which had been the unceasing object of his aversion and hostility, were to be rendered, for his convenience, the sanctuary of his crimes, we should have become the laughing stock of the world, and of no one individual so much as him who would have profited by our folly. As to his treatment being without precedent, it was obvious to reply, that the circumstances constituted a *casus omissus* in the Law of Nations; that as the provocations which Europe had received were absolutely without parallel, so was there no provision for their punishment, and that it was preeminently one of those occasions, in which the end justified the means. In regard to denying Napoleon the title of emperor, it was in vain I reminded my friend, that on accepting the sovereignty of Elba, he had relinquished every claim to that distinction; that on his return as an usurper, he had not been re-elected nor recognised by any act of

of the French nation or temporary government, and that the battle of Waterloo, and consequent re-establishment of Louis the Eighteenth, rendered his pretensions to an Imperial or even a Royal designation, nothing less than laughable. After all this, and much more that I urged, my Dutchman remained

"Convinced against his will,
"And of the same opinion still,"

impressed with the idea, that the generous Alexander had interfered, and that the main question was conclusively determined. When I suggested that an act of the British Parliament could not be annulled by any proceeding of the Congress, and that their consent was indispensable to its repeal, he stared inordinately, and plainly insinuated, that I had lost the little understanding he once gave me credit for possessing, or that I was unfeelingly jocular upon such a serious subject. Here, however, I had no difficulty in rectifying his error, so far as the rights of our

constitution were concerned; but no argument could induce him to believe, that the influence of Russia would not be exercised, and with ultimate success, for the attainment of the object he had so warmly at heart. He thought the Emperor so magnanimous a Monarch, so good a Christian, and so weak a man, that he could embrace and forgive—the Firebrand of Moscow! As to the imputed severities of Buonaparte's personal treatment, he was more reasonable; for he admitted it to be inconsistent with probability, notwithstanding the vehement representations of *Las Casas*, that the situation of the prisoner had been rendered more irksome than was unavoidable for security. He assented to my position, that it neither could be the policy nor the wish of England to aggravate his sufferings—that safe detention was the only consideration; and he seemed satisfied, when I assured him, that Sir Hudson Lowe had no political connexion

to protect him, if he exceeded his powers; and that in such an event, which, from his character, I believed impossible, the Ministry neither would nor could continue him in the appointment of Governor of St. Helena for a single day.

The only published proceeding of the Congress is freely and generally discussed,—the evacuation of France by the allied armies. Upon this, amongst the wiseheads here, a great diversity of opinion prevails. The French are rejoiced at it, and are unanimous in declaring it a most prudent, noble, and necessary measure; whilst many profound reasoners of other countries discover in it the certain seeds of war, which will be brought to maturity before the expiration of the ensuing summer. They say that we have strengthened France too soon, and that she will exert her powers upon the first favourable opportunity, to recover Belgium and the left Bank of the Rhine. In support of

this opinion it is urged, that the population of these countries would almost to a man co-operate heartily in the attempt, from disinclination to their new masters, and attachment to their late ones, who left indelible impressions of esteem wherever they were established. Of the French Government they argue in a syllogistic way: if they be strong, their characteristic ambition must be displayed; if weak, war will be forced upon them by a turbulent and unsettled people, as the only refuge from more formidable domestic disasters. In fact they have little faith in the capability of the most able Ministry to control a nation which still considers itself the Conqueror of Europe, has grown old without the benefit of experience, and which has not yet been sufficiently subdued. I would not arrogate to myself so much political prescience as to pronounce these speculations altogether visionary; and only expressed my conviction, that the mea-

sure they complained of having been sanctioned by the most competent authorities deeply interested in its decision, their satisfaction of its expediency was the best security such a momentous question was capable of receiving.

Amidst such a contrariety of opinions, it was gratifying to ascertain, that there is one point on which they are all agreed,—the honour and good faith of England. Whatever may be said upon this subject at home, by irritated and disappointed statesmen, it is believed abroad, that we can never have any interest, nor have we shewn the inclination, to interfere in the concerns of the Continent beyond what may be necessary for the public good, or, as it is politically termed, the due maintenance of the balance of power. They think, that we can have no selfish views of aggrandisement by tranfers of territory, and that the changes which have taken place within the latter years, can only affect us in

the degree they may contribute to the permanent preservation of tranquillity in Europe. This they admit to be the sole motive of English solicitude in their concerns, and they are equally ready to concede, that, considering the proud pre-eminence on which we stand, we have used with moderation the rights we had acquired by our inexhaustible resources and undaunted perseverance.

It is but justice to record, as inseparably connected with these sentiments, that they speak of Lord Castlereagh with the highest admiration of his abilities and esteem for his character! England is, in their eyes, personified by him! As he walks to the hotel, where the respective Ministers assemble, it is impossible to avoid contrasting the unostentatious modesty of his appearance with the splendid dresses and equipages of of his compeers. Engrossed by the momentous concerns in which he is engaged, his Lordship seems to banish every other con-

sideration. The people stare at him, but salute him respectfully; and it amused me to hear them, unaccustomed to such a freedom from parade and such an air of deep reflection, whisper as he passed, *Ah, qu'il est solide!* This is indeed an epithet, by which they are apt to designate the generality of Englishmen,—ignorant, how few have similar pretensions.

I shall take my leave of Aix-la-Chapelle to-morrow, for I am really desirous to learn what they are doing at Congress.

LETTER X.

Cologne, November, 1818.

IT would have been a dull movement to retrace the road to Cambrai, for the purpose of proceeding to Paris, my ultimate destination, and the proximity of the Rhine to Aix-la-Chapelle was too powerful a temptation to resist. Accordingly I resolved on visiting that celebrated river, and went the first evening through a bleak uninteresting country to *Juliers,* which has nothing to recommend it except the fortifications, which were once considerable, but have been suffered to remain in a neglected and almost

dilapidated state since the last bombardment by the French; nor is there any probability of the works of this ancient town being restored to their original importance.

Obscure as Juliers is, it made an impression upon me, arising from an accident, which had better have befallen any other traveller than myself. I arrived there late at night, cold and hungry; to my no small solace, there was scarcely any thing in the culinary catalogue, that an agreeable and accomplished landlady did not ask me, would I please to have. To her enquiries I replied, give me something,—I care not what,—but let it be soon. After waiting more than an hour, and ringing repeatedly, she came in, and desired to know whether I liked Woodcock? Yes, very much. Hare? Nothing can be better. They were quickly on the table, and mine hostess entered into conversation, detailing to me the story of her woes, "that the day before she had gone to extra-

ordinary trouble in preparing a collation for the Empress Dowager of Russia; that for one Woodcock she had paid *twelve francs*, but that her Majesty did not alight from her carriage, and drove on without partaking of the rarities provided at such an enormous expence." I condoled with her from politeness, little foreseeing that I was myself to be the object of compassion; for in the morning my bill was four times greater than I had paid for the most luxurious supper since the commencement of my tour. It was vain to remonstrate. I have been so long accustomed to the frowns of fortune, and have suffered so many crosses and disappointments in life, that the adventure did not surprise me much; although I certainly did not calculate upon ever having to pay for an entertainment intended for the Empress Dowager of Russia. My consolation is, that from the approved liberality of her Majesty's character, if this anecdote should

reach her Imperial ears, I cannot have the smallest doubt of being remunerated amply.

The finest road I have yet gone over is now nearly completed from Juliers to Cologne, and it is particularly requisite, in order to beguile the tediousness of an uninteresting seven hours dreary drive. I travelled in a Caleche, which is nearly an open carriage, with two German ladies; and although the frost was severe, and the day bitterly cold, both their heads were perfectly uncovered for the entire way, their shawls and bonnets laying upon their laps. I could only account for their hardiness by the volubility of their tongues, the incessant exercise of which must have imparted warmth and promoted circulation through the remainder of their frames.

Arrived at Cologne, I hastened from my hotel, through long and dirty streets, eager for the first inspection of the Rhine; and grand and beautiful was the sight of its

proudly swelling stream. Connected with so many memorable events, it seemed to me like a vast historical mirror expanded before my view, and suddenly reflecting the images of long-forgotton days. Lost in the most delightful reveries, I wandered upon the shore 'till it was dark, and could not cease to congratulate myself upon the circumstances which had brought me to its banks.

Before I enter upon a description of the present state of the town, you may be glad to learn somewhat of its ancient condition. It originated in a Roman camp, transplanted by *Marcus Agrippa* from the right to the left bank of the Rhine, and was at first denominated, the Capital of the *Ubii*. It was afterwards enlarged by a colony, which the Emperor *Claudius* sent there to gratify his wife *Agrippina*, and thence received the name of *Colonia Agrippina*, from which Cologne, or, as they write here, Colen,

is derived. *Vitellius* was proclaimed Emperor in the town, and *Trajan* discharged the functions of Imperial Legate when *Nerva* selected him to participate the diadem. *Sylvanus*, who was also proclaimed Emperor here, was assassinated on the spot, where the Church of *St. Severin* stands at present. The traces of the Romans are still to be distinctly marked: Upon one gate, the characters C. C. A. A. are legible, *Colonia, Claudia, Agrippina, Augusta.* A subterraneous aqueduct, the utility of which has puzzled antiquaries, is also to be seen, and the piles of a bridge across the Rhine by the Emperor Constantine; but most of the monuments of the old mistress of the world have been destroyed or removed. It is supposed, that many of the statues, columns, and inscriptions, were taken to *Ingelheim*, to embellish Charlemagne's palace; many were deposited in the Church of Aix-la-Chapelle, and others disappeared under the

exterminating ravages of the *Huns*. Cologne was distinguished in the middle ages by being the principal support of the powerful Hanseatic League. At that time she furnished above twenty thousand men, able to carry arms; and the most conclusive proof of her then existing opulence, was the possession of sixty-nine convents, nineteen parish churches, and forty-nine chapels, which were endowed by the riches and the piety of the inhabitants. But this evidence of her wealth was eventually the source of her impoverishment, In 1405 all the Jews, a most industrious and commercial race, were banished; some years after, in consequence of an insurrection, the principal manufacturers of cloth were driven from the town, and fled for refuge to *Aix-la-Chapelle, Verviers,* and other places; and to crown all this ill-fated absurdity, in 1618, every Protestant was expelled, and above fourteen hundred houses were left untenanted.

From this concise sketch of the former prosperity and subsequent decline of Cologne, you may be surprised to hear, that its present condition is every day improving, and that industry and commerce afford the almost certain prospect of ease and independence to the inhabitants. The population is estimated at about fifty thousand; and the manufactures of silk and cotton, hats, gloves, and snuff, with its celebrated perfumed waters, produce a considerable revenue, and give employment to so many, that indigence or mendicity are altogether unknown. The police of the town is admirably correct, and, in consequence, a stranger will not only find himself free from molestation here, but furnished with every facility he can reasonably require. To illustrate this, I shall mention two regulations; the one, that all hotel-keepers are obliged to have suspended, in their *salons*, a printed schedule of the prices of every thing which a traveller can want for his accommodation,

I saw some families of foreigners arrive at night, and, on inspection of one of these, leave the house where I was, considering the charges to be too high; by this, an opportunity is afforded to the most ignorant person to check the items of his bill, if he conceive himself imposed on. The other regulation is also a printed rate for the services of the *Commissionaire*, who attends you in your walk; and so strictly is this observed, that you are not embarrassed, as at the generality of places, by being told to give what you please, but are referred to the table, and remunerate by the hour.

Under the auspices of one of these useful guides, I was conducted to the principal churches, the only buildings worthy of attention here. That which was intended for a cathedral is of the most magnificent order, and one of the finest specimens extant of the ancient German architecture. It is still in a very unfinished state, although it

was begun in the year 1248. The works were carried on until 1499, when, from want of funds and the immensity of the scale, they were discontinued, and have never been since resumed. The choir and the chapels which surround it, are the only parts complete, and never did I see any thing more beautiful nor so exquisitely delicate as the lattice work, which admits a chastened light from an aisle four hundred and eighty feet long by one hundred and sixty wide. The marble statues and columns and monuments are venerable from their age, and admirable for their execution; and in a room upon the left of the choir, which is called the golden chamber, there was an inestimable treasure of religious ornaments and utensils superbly decorated with diamonds, of which they were of course despoiled when invaded by the French. A considerable part of this was restored in 1804.

The Church of St. Peter is principally remarkable for the altar-piece, by *Rubens*,

of the Crucifixion of the Apostle. Having heard of this as a *chef-d'œuvre*, my expectations had been highly raised, and were at first sadly disappointed; my attention was suddenly diverted, the picture was turned in the frame, and all the perfection of the great artist's genius broke upon my view. The former exhibition was a copy upon the back by a modern painter,—but how unlike! though not without its merit; and they practice the illusion to increase the effect of the performance they are proud of, and perhaps to recommend themselves more successively to the pocket of the astonished spectator.

But the oldest and most curious church here is certainly that of *St. Gereon*, having been built in 1066, upon the site of a Roman temple. The entire of the interior, walls, and cieling, is covered and disfigured by scriptural pieces of the gaudiest colouring and the richest gilding. You ascend the altar by thirty steep steps of marble, and a more

dazzling perspective can scarcely be imagined. The recommendation of this church however is not its splendor, but a subterraneous *crypta*, which is unquestionably Roman, from the evidence of the Mosaic pavement and the inscriptions, parts of which are legible. It is fitted up as a chapel, and occasionally made use of for purposes of devotion. The arches are supported by twenty-four pillars, and between each of them there is a well-grown bay tree, in tubs of earth, which gives an increased character of awful solemnity to the inseparable gloominess of the place. There are also some very ancient figures in niches in the walls, of which I could not obtain a satisfactory account: they are represented to be the Martyrs of *Thebes*. St. Mary of the Capitol, founded by *Plectrudis*, the wife of *Pepin*, upon the site of the ancient Capitol of the Romans, is also a church deserving of attention, containing as it does many indisputable evidences of the

antiquity it claims. There are others of inferior note, but not one which will not repay the trouble of examination. In that of the Minorites is the tomb of *Duns Scotus*, and amidst the ruins of the Dominicans repose the ashes of *Albertus Magnus*.

The theatre is externally a very plain building, but within commodiously and tastefully arranged. Two figures of Silence and Attention, larger than life, are placed upon the stage, with the appropriate mottos of *Tace* and *Audi*, which produce the desired effect. I could not contemplate the decorum of the house without recollecting the O. P.'s and the disturbances which in England so frequently convert the rational entertainment of the drama into the tumultuous riots of a bear-garden.

The streets of Cologne are, without exception, dark, dirty, and narrow. There is a spacious market-place, abundantly stocked with vegetables; and to judge from the

table d'hote, at *la Cour Imperiale*, there is an ample supply of all the necessaries and luxuries of life. The first of the flying bridges across the Rhine is here, towed over by seven small boats; and, as I was informed, one thousand persons can pass on it at a time. The beauties and wonders of the river are all upon my *route*, and I anticipate them with impatience.

LETTER XI.

Coblentz, November, 1818.

THE greater part of the road from Cologne to Bonn, the next place of importance, is flat and insipid; but, as you approach the latter, the stupendous mountains which enclose the Rhine, burst upon the view with awful grandeur, and here the magnificent scenery begins.

The town of Bonn derives its origin from a colony of the *Ubii*, and has undergone, during the lapse of time, many memorable vicissitudes. Besieged and taken by assault at different periods, once by the Duke

of Marlborough, its ancient architectural monuments have been long since annihilated, with the exception of an altar erected by the Romans to the Goddess of Victory, which is considered by antiquarians to be the genuine *Ara Ubiorum.* There are no buildings there that can boast an earlier date than the beginning of the last century, when the superb palace was commenced by the Elector Joseph Clement, and finished by his successor, Clement Augustus. This truly princely mansion was almost entirely dismantled by the French, but is now undergoing a complete repair by order of the King of Prussia, who intends it for an University, which will compensate to the town for the loss of the residence of their much respected and regretted Electors. Forty professors have already arrived, and accommodation will be afforded to four hundred students. The grounds and gardens of the palace are beautifully situated, and laid out with singularly

good taste, commanding an extensive prospect of the river and the widely-stretching hills, and constituting such a promenade, as it would be equally difficult to imagine or to describe.

There are many ingenious and literary men resident at Bonn, of whom, I believe, the Canon *Pick* is one of the most distinguished. His collection of coins and medals and Roman relics attracts the admiration of every connoisseur who passes through the town, and he displays and explains them with civility and zeal. His Majesty of Prussia lately proposed to purchase them for twenty thousand crowns, but the Canon declined the offer, and I understand they are estimated at five times that sum.

On leaving Bonn, within about a league of the town, the first conspicuous object is a Roman castle, upon the summit of a mountain, originally called *Mons Jovis*, and translated into the German, *Goddesberg*, its

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present name. In the immediate neighbourhood there are mineral waters and baths of great celebrity, which, united with the beauty and healthfulness of the situation, have induced many families from various parts of Europe to establish themselves there.

I have had repeated occasions to remark the moderateness of the charges compared with the excellence of the *tables d'hote*; and unimportant as it may be, I am tempted to specify one dinner and its price at Rhenam, a small town on the road to Coblentz. We had soup, bouille, veal cutlets, ham, roast mutton, hare, woodcocks, abundance of the best fruit, and a pint, each, of very good wine, for one shilling and eleven pence. The inn was small, but the master of it a personage of no little consequence in his own opinion. The King of Prussia had slept there on his way to the Congress. In the morning the innkeeper had the modesty to ask permission of his Majesty to hang him at the door, which

was graciously conceded, and he piques himself accordingly upon being the only proprietor in the dictrict of a Royal hotel.

Not far from this, at *Sinzig*, where the Romans had a considerable settlement, my attention was directed to a chapel, in which a body is deposited that had lain there four hundred years unmouldered and undisturbed, 'till it was taken by the French to Paris to enrich their cabinet of curiosities. It has been since restored to the earnest solicitations of the inhabitants, many of whom declared, that they would rather be deprived of their wives than of this self-constituted mummy. It has the appearance of a petrefaction, and, I believe, it is authenticated, that no artificial means were ever resorted to for the production of such a singular phenomenon.

Upon the banks of the Rhine I passed some magnificent buildings, which had once been convents; they have all been converted

to secular purposes, but one, in which nine antiquated nuns continue to reside. To the astonishment of their neighbours, they have survived the affront of being unmolested by the French; as every sister, who was not an antidote to the tender passion, had been released from the austerities of a monastic life by the *gallant* soldiers of that successful army, and these nine were left in peaceable possession of their solitude and their veils.

Close to the village of *Tourblanche*, which ought now to be called *Tournoir*, for it has lost its whiteness, stands a marble monument to General Hoche, a name which can never be forgotten in Ireland. Upon the front of it, facing the road, the following simple inscription, in letters of gold, is to be seen,—"*L'Armée du Sambre et Meuse a Son General en Chef, Hoche.*" There are large apertures in the sides, intended for suitable inscriptions, which were to have been sent from Paris, but they never arrived. The

whole has in consequence an unfinished, or rather a dilapidated appearance. Six miles from this, and near to Coblentz, a much more humble tomb of stone to the memory of another French General presents itself to the traveller's attention; but the circumstances connected with its situation, render it extremely interesting, and reflect such credit upon the King of Prussia as ought to be recorded with more imperishable praise than my faint tribute can possibly confer. It had been erected upon the heights, where fortifications are now constructing on the grandest scale. The engineer proposed to take it down, and to employ the materials in the works. His Majesty forbad this violation of the dead, forgot the wrongs he had received from France, and had the monument carefully removed to a place of shelter and security, immediately below its original position. Upon the four sides of the column there are memorials of no ordinary fame.

1st. *Ici repose Marceau, né a Chartres, Département d'Eure et Loire ; Soldat à XVI ans, Général à XXII ans. Il mourut en combattant pour sa patrie le dernier jour de l'an IV. de la Rep. Franc. Qui que tu sois, ami ou ennemi, de ce jeune Heros, respecte ses cendres.*

2d. *L'armée de Sambre et Meuse, après sa retraite de la Franconie, quittait la Lahn. Le Général Marceau commandait l'aile droite ; il était chargé de couvrir les divisions qui défilaient sur Altenkirchen le III. jour compl. an IV.*

3d. *Il faisait ses dispositions au sortir de la forêt de Höchstenbach, lorsqu'il fut mortellement atteint d'une balle. On le transporta à Altenkirchen, où sa faiblesse obligea de l'abandonner à la générosité des ennemis. Il mourut entre les bras de quelques Français et des généraux Autrichiens dans la XXVI. Année de son âge.*

4th. *Il vainquit dans les champs de Fleurus, sur les bords de l'Ourte, de la Roer, de la Moselle et du Rhin. L'armée de Sambre et Meuse a son brave Général Marceau.*

Je voudrois qu'il me'ût couté le quart de mon Sang et vous tinse en santé mon prisonnier! Quoique je sache que l'Empereur mon Maitre, n'eût en ses guerres plus rude ni fâcheux ennemi. Memoires du Chevalier Bayard. Allusion aux paroles du General Autrichien, Baron de Kray.

It is manifest from the inscriptions upon the tomb of this young hero, that he was honored in his last moments by the enemy who had suffered most severely from the prowess of his arm; and it is impossible to withhold our admiration of the good taste and gratitude which, in recording the glories of the deceased, have immortalised the magnanimity of the Austrian General, De Kray.

Coblentz has perhaps fewer existing evidences to produce of its antiquity, than most of the towns upon the Rhine, although from its confluence with the *Moselle*, and the strength and boldness of its situation, it must

have been a place of considerable importance, and appreciated as such by the Romans. It has no buildings of architectural beauty, ancient or modern, except that which was formerly the Palace of the Elector of *Treves*. This was converted into a barrack by the French army; and you may easily imagine the devastation that ensued. A part of it is occupied at present by Prussian troops; and this magnificent edifice, with its chapel and its theatre adjoining, fallen from its high eminence; awakens the most melancholy recollections in the people; reminding them, as it does, of the splendor and munificence of which it had been so lately the celebrated seat. The *place* or square in front of it surpasses in extent all others that I have seen, affording a variety of agreeable and convenient walks, with a spacious carriage road in the centre. The grand attraction of Coblentz, the fortress of Ehrenbreitsen, at the other side of the Rhine, begins to revive

from the ravages of French demolition. You may form some idea of its pristine magnitude and subsequent destruction, from the fact, that, for the last three years, two thousand men have been daily employed in removing the rubbish of the ruins, and in constructing a few casemates on the first line of the works. It is intended to restore them to their original condition; and with the same number of workmen, they do not calculate upon the accomplishment of their design in less than fifteen years. On re-crossing the river upon the flying bridge, a curious character engaged my notice, a Jew, who earned there sometimes as much as a hundred *francs* a day, by cutting impressions upon seals of brass, with which he was provided, for the occasional passengers. He cut the initials of my name, so as to make a very good impression, in three minutes, and, in compliment to my country, charged me two *francs*, his customary demand being but one.

There are two new fortifications erecting upon the left bank, the *Chartreuse* and *Petersberg*; upon these the same number of men has been employed for the last three years. Six more will be requisite for the completion of the former, and three for the latter, with an undiminished complement of artificers. You will perceive by this, that the King of Prussia is not less determined on keeping possession of his new territory, than the King of the Netherlands, of Belgium, and that he is adopting similar means. The people were here at first dissatisfied with the change from their old Electors, but the money which is circulating amongst the lower orders, and, in consequence, diffusing itself in such a variety of channels, begins to reconcile them, and knowing that they cannot have their ancient rulers, they decidedly prefer the Prussians to the French. This is their inclination, but the opinion of many, with whom I conversed, was, that long

before the fortresses can be rendered impregnable, war will be renewed upon the Continent; and their late masters, once more, be triumphant. Upon this subject, their prejudices are so strong, that it would be vain to reason with them.

LETTER XII.

Mayence, November, 1818.

TO form an adequate conception of the beauties of the Rhine, it is indispensable to travel from Coblentz here by the new road, of which Buonaparte has the credit, although it had been laid out and imperfectly made long before he carried his arms into Germany. But if he had not the merit of the original design, he certainly is entitled to that of execution and improvement; and if the King of France himself were to visit this country, he would be disposed to pardon the Emperor many of his

offences for this surprising work of usefulness and taste. It runs, for the greater part of the way, close to the river, overhung by stupendously high rocky mountains, the features of the opposite side nearly corresponding in sublimity and terror. From the proximity to the water, and the depth of the precipices, many parts had been extremely dangerous, and that, the only defect, is now obviating by the erection of parapets, wherever they were wanted.

At *Boppart*, the remains of one of the fifty castles built by Drusus on the Rhine are to be seen. The tower is in good preservation, and one wall of considerable length, and of a solidity characteristic of its age. Upon the opposite side, the Castle of Kosler is an imposing object, and the village in the valley between the two mountains, which almost touch, seems destined to be crushed by their gigantic embrace, or buried by the precipitation of their tremendous

rocks. At *Helseld,* the course of the river turns abruptly, so to form nearly a right angle, and the effect is beyond description beautiful, presenting, as it does, the appearance of an immense lake, at a little distance beneath the sweetly situated town of *St. Goar.* Here the ruins of, I believe, the most magnificent castle upon the Rhine command your admiration. It was built by *Thierri,* the Rich, in the year 1245, sustained a blockade, while in his possession, of fifteen months, by the combined forces of sixty towns, which led to the first confederation of the Rhine, was afterwards, in 1692, besieged in vain by the celebrated *Tallard,* but surrendered upon the first summons to the French revolutionary army, and was by them blown up.

From Boppart to *Bacharach,* the scenery is of the most sublime and captivating character: I could compare it only to an unbroken continuity of the boldest lakes in

Cumberland and Westmoreland,—the water not so wide, but the similitude of the *tout ensemble* eminently striking. *Bacharach*, is the ancient *Bacchi Ara*, a title which establishes the celebrity of its wine; but not satisfied with the strong presumptive proof of excellence which this affords, they boast, that Pope Pius the Second had a tun of it, every year, conveyed to Rome, and that for four *pieces* of it, the town of *Nuremberg* obtained its independence.

The culture of the vine upon the perpendicular sides of these craggy precipices, where apparently there is not a particle of earth, is indeed an object of great interest and curiosity. The plant is stuck into the crevices of the rocks, and nourished by small quantities of manure, which are taken up in baskets, in the arms or on the backs of men, for no other animal could ascend those giddy heights. I saw many of them engaged in this perilous occupation, and could no longer

be surprised, that Rhenish wines were such a costly beverage.

It would be tedious to enumerate the many fine remains of castles, that are almost inaccessible, built upon the projecting points of rocks, which overhang the river. In the boldest situation, it astonishes to contemplate one of those "cloud-clapped towers" in perfect preservation. It was erected in 1400, by the Archduke John, has never been suffered to dilapidate, and is at present inhabited by the Duke of Nassau.

Not far from *Bingen*, a town of considerable commerce, the road departs from the borders of the Rhine, and runs through a highly cultivated country, but the tameness of whose features has but little attraction after the majestic wildness of the preceding scenery. The only object of interest, 'till you reach *Mayence*, is the Palace of *Ingelheim*, where Charlemagne so long resided. It was built by him upon the grandest scale,

between the years 768 and 774, was occupied by many succeeding Emperors, and although it has suffered materially from the ravages of war, the remains are of sufficient extent to demonstrate its original importance

Of the ancient celebrity of Mayence, there are many existing monuments, the most authentic and interesting of which is the tomb of Drusus, situated upon the highest part of the commanding citadel. His name is identified to this day with two considerable fortresses. In the seventieth year of the Christian era, the 22d legion, employed under Titus at the siege of Jerusalem, was sent to garrison Mayence; and if any doubt of this historical fact prevailed, it was removed about ten years since by the labours of the French: in clearing a space of ground within a mile of the town, for the purpose of constructing fortifications, they discovered a vast number of sepulchral stones, erected

to the memory of departed Romans, especially of that legion. I had the satisfaction of seeing them in the Lyceum; they are for the greater part in perfect preservation, the inscriptions legible, and apparently uninjured by time, arranged according to the legions or cohorts they were designed for, and a specific class for the *Liberti, Servi et Ancillæ.* There are besides many other valuable relics, including a very large sarcophagus and some immense vases for wine. Of these a particular account is to be soon published by the learned Professor who presides over the institution.

Mayence had more than its share of suffering in the protracted conflicts between the Romans and the Germans, and had the credit of being the founder of the Hanseatic league to check the devastations of the brigands, who were masters of most of the castles upon the Rhine. But its greatest glory and immortal pride is, the invention

of printing; for although *Guttenburg* had made some rude essays at *Harlem*, it was here that he matured and perfected his conception. With little interruption, the beneficial consequences of this discovery have been felt in the encouragement of literature and the fine arts, and there is at this moment an air of civilization at Mayence that distinguishes it from all the other towns I have visited upon the Rhine a pre-eminence, which, without reasoning with too much refinement, may be traced to its original possession of this inestimable art. Pardon the partiality of an author—for to this source of happiness to some, disappointment to others, but of hope to all, these letters are indebted for their appearance before the public.

The town of Mayence has copious claims to admiration, independently of the charms it derives from the Rhine, and the tributary *Maine*, which flows into it here. The streets and squares are spacious; the

houses, of which there are many upon a magnificent scale, are built with taste and regularity; and it is only to be regretted, that all the noble families but two have deserted their splendid habitations, which are occupied by the military, or converted into hotels. The Cathedral, which was built in the twelfth century, notwithstanding some injuries it has sustained, is still a splendid piece of architecture, abounding with fine monuments and exquisite sculpture. The Church of St. Peter is worthy of attention on account of the abundance of valuable Italian marble it contains in the altars and pillars, and the painting of the dome by *Appiani*, which represents the Apostle in multiplied employment with his keys, admitting, rejecting, compliant and obdurate, according to the merits of the respective candidates.

The Lyceum, that I have already mentioned, is an institution of which Mayence may be justly vain, containing as it does a

library of eighty thousand volumes, some of the earliest specimens of printing, a cabinet of natural history, a gallery of pictures, most of them the donation of Buonaparte, and the unquestionable evidences of the Roman settlement here, from which the historian and antiquarian must derive so high a gratification. Amongst the modern curiosities, the model of a bridge across the Rhine to *Cassel*, projected by Napoleon, is much the most attractive. It was to have consisted of fourteen arches, one hundred and twenty-five French feet between each, and the elevation of the arch from the level of the river to have been two hundred and seventy-five. Between the surface of the bridge and the arches, a covered way was to have been constructed for the passage of an army, and the design of the whole was certainly not the least magnificent conception of that man, of whom it may be more justly said, than it was originally of a celebrated statesman,

"that he had great abilities, of which God had given him the use, and the Devil the application."

Mayence having been the chief town of one of the departments of France had, in consequence of the civil and military establishments, an extensive intercourse with that nation, and their departure was generally regretted on account of the agreeableness of their manners and the circulation of their money. In one trifling particular, a considerable sum was expended. Soon after they had honoured the town with their fraternal embrace, they were invited to a public entertainment. The name of the former Prefect was *Jambon;* he and his family were universally beloved, and after supper one of the good citizens proposed to drink the health of, *Les Jambons de Mayence, les meilleurs au monde*; this was graciously received by the strangers and enthusiastically by the inhabitants. The next morning, every *ham* to be

procured was purchased, and despatched to Paris, as the most acceptable present; and Mayence has been since described, in the Traveller's Guide, as remarkable for the quality of its hams, from this accidental and ludicrous occurrence.

I had expressed to my landlord an anxiety to hear some good music, and he introduced me to a club of twelve gentlemen amateurs, who met at his house every Saturday night, and had a concert of exquisite performers. After passing some agreeable hours with them, the waiter, a familiar fellow, as they are all abroad, came and whispered me with a smile, that I was the only Christian in company, for that the rest were Jews. This information surprised me a good deal, as more social or civilized men I have seldom had the satisfaction to meet, and whatever prejudice I might have entertained before against the Israelite, was softened into compassion for his obduracy and wonder at his

ignorance. It was quite impossible from their manners or appearance to suspect that they were of that blind and persecuted race. Here, however, I learned, by subsequent enquiry, that they had been long established, had a population of nearly four thousand, and from their character and conduct were highly and deservedly esteemed.

The alleged custom of sleeping between feather-beds in Germany had always appeared to me as an exaggerated statement, but I found it to be literally true. You may imagine the inconvenience resulting from this; for if you apprehend being suffocated by heat, there is no alternative but perishing from cold. Remove the load that oppresses you, and there remains but a single slight coverlet, blankets being utterly unknown, at least at every inn that I have slept at on the Rhine. But I am about to re-enter France, where, I believe, the best beds in the world are to be found.

LETTER XIII.

Paris, November, 1818.

AFTER the delightful scenery I had been enjoying upon the Rhine, the road to Paris appeared particularly dull and disagreeable; and even without labouring under the disadvantages of such a contrast, a traveller might sleep for nearly the entire way, without sustaining any loss, so far at least as rural prospects are concerned; but in other respects it is by no means an uninteresting journey. The town of *Metz* alone, with its impregnable fortifications, has numerous attractions, the churches and public offices and

institutions being all upon a splendid scale, and considerably larger than any I had seen in France before. Contiguous to the *Moselle*, which flows through the town, the walks and gardens are a source of equal pleasure and convenience, and in order to preserve them, there are notices posted up in different parts, by which the Mayor requests the inhabitants to assist him in preventing any injury or mischief; and by thus making them an object of universal care, they are in the neatest imaginable order.—This being the first French town of importance, in which I had been since the evacuation by the allied armies, I was anxious to ascertain the effects of it upon the sentiments of the people, and I had the pleasure to find the most perfect unanimity of delight and gratitude, an increased attachment to the House of Bourbon, and a general expectation of prosperity and peace. It was supposed and said by many, that an Englishman could no longer travel here in

safety, and that, at best, he would be subjected to insults and annoyances. But at Metz, a very large populous garrison town, I can aver with truth, that in the theatre and the coffee-houses, which were almost exclusively filled by military men, I experienced the most perfect civility, and never the slightest allusion of disrespect to my country but once in the streets, when a *Godam*, accompanied by a laugh, was muttered as I passed. Far different, I fear, would be the reception of a Frenchman in a similarly circumstanced provincial town in England, and that without any adventitious cause, but arising purely from the ancient national prejudice and antipathy.

From Metz you traverse mountain heaped on mountain, over a road of ingenious construction, but in detestable condition 'till you approach the celebrated *Verdun*, when the hills are no longer barren, and the landscape is altogether pleasing. As we en-

tered the gates, I could not avoid reflecting upon my unfortunate countrymen, who had been so long imprisoned within its walls or precincts in the most unjustifiable opposition to the law of nations, and it suggested to me *twelve hundred* additional arguments for the the propriety of continuing Buonaparte at St. Helena. If he or his advocates had any sense of shame, the recollection of his conduct upon that occasion would silence every complaint against his present treatment. He was the first to establish the precedent of precautionary confinement, and it is but reasonable that he should have the benefit of his own invention. *Fas est vel ab hosté doceri.*—It was two hours before I could get any thing to eat at *Verdun*, and there was an unnecessary and almost insolent delay at the gates in the morning, so that the habit of mortifying and detaining the English has not yet been forgotten. Their liberation was a material injury to the town, and is

lamented with unfeigned sincerity by the inhabitants, for the expenditure of their money was of no contemptible importance, and with a few exceptions, inseparable from such an assemblage, their demeanour was of that conciliatory character, which commanded respect and admiration.

Between *St. Menehould* and *Chalons*, on the left of the road, a village was pointed out to me of the extraordinary length of two leagues. It is the residence of the farmers for a vast extent of the surrounding country, a cottage standing singly being here, as in most parts of the Continent, altogether unknown.

It is not until you approach *Epernay*, which is called the throne of the Champagne country, that vineyards of luxuriance and magnitude are to be seen. In summer their appearance must be beautiful, but now they are scarcely a relief to the dark hills on which they stand. My enquiries about the

celebrated wine of this district elicited information, which was new to me, that white Champagne is invariably made from black grapes, and that the *Moussu* or sparkling is produced by the simple addition of sugar candy, *par préference*, to the ordinary liquor. I overheard a whisper at the house of a vintner, that the white wines of this year are of an inferior quality, and that the red are remarkably good,—a fact which may be useful to the merchants, and will be deplored by many of the nobility and gentry of the united kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland. For an excellent bottle of last year's wine, my fellow-traveller and I were charged the sum of—one shilling and eight-pence sterling, without any deduction.

We had proceeded to within about ten miles of Paris, before there was an indication of the proximity of the metropolis, and, when discovered, it was only to be known by comparison with the listlessness of the

preceding road. It was in vain I looked for the bustle of business or the career of pleasure discernible for three times that distance from London. No private equipages whatever did I meet, and even within four miles, but for the evidence of a considerable number of provision carts passing and repassing, I should have doubted the assurance, that I was so near this far-famed city. But once within its walls, I soon recognised the capital not only of a great but glorious kingdom. Upon the score of magnificence, of those who would place London in competition with Paris, I should not say that they were deficient in taste, but that they wanted sight. The force of a first impression may be so powerful as in some degree to warp the judgment; but the maxim of "*Nil admirari*," is my constant guide, and I am certainly free from that prejudice against every thing abroad, and partiality in favour of every thing at home, by which the mind's

eye of many has been blinded, who upon all other questions are reasonable and just.

Before I enlarge upon the subject, I must be more intimately acquainted with the sources of my delight and astonishment; premising, that I shall adhere to my original engagement of avoiding the repetition of what has been already described by others, and if I should transgress, I have only to entreat you will accept my ignorance for my apology.

LETTER XIV.

Paris, December, 1818.

TO form an adequate idea of the magnificence of Paris by the most captivating *coup d'œil,* you should enter from *St. Germains,* which is by far the finest approach. After passing through an avenue of full-grown trees, at least a mile in length, the central dome of the *Tuileries* terminating the Vista, you find yourself in the *Place Louis Quinze,* and are astonished by the grandeur of the objects, which present themselves in whatever direction you may look. The

Palace and its gardens, with groups of sculptured horses on elevated pedestals at the entrance,—the *Palais Bourbon*, where the Chamber of Deputies assemble,—the *Garde Meuble*,—the *Marine*, all on a stupendous scale, and, what is most material, without any inferior edifice to diminish the effect,—are stamped with such an air of Majesty, that when first I beheld them, I fancied myself actually in the presence of the greatest potentate upon earth. But, imposing as this mighty architectural constellation may be at a distance, it sunk in my estimation upon a closer inspection. The Tuileries, as a building, has little but its enormous size to recommend it; and the gardens, commodious and extensive, 'though they are, with their innumerable statues, to my taste, are not comparable for beauty to our Parks in London. Their charm consists, I believe, in being so contiguous to the abode of royalty, the association of ideas produced by that and

the crowds of agreeable and well-dressed people, by whom they are every day frequented.

In the interior of the town, the grandest point of view is unquestionably from the *Pont Neuf*, embracing as it does the *Louvre* on the right, and the *Institut*, the Mint, and other public buildings, upon the left of the *Seine*. A finely executed statue in bronze of *Henri Quatre* has been just erected upon the bridge, to replace the one which had been destroyed by revolutionary rage. The artist, in his zeal to accomplish his glorious task even to the minutest extreme, fatigued himself so much by the labour of putting up this splendid specimen of his skill and taste, that he died on the day after the termination of his toil. The illustrious Monarch seems to frown indignantly upon the column to *Dessaix* in the *Place Dauphine*, which is nearly opposite, a monument unworthy of that General and of the nation that he served so well.

The hall of the *Institut*, or as it is better known in England by the name of the Royal Academy, is peculiarly attractive. It contains the statues of the most celebrated scholars and poets and philosophers of France, unmixed with any other characters, and at the very portal of the Chamber where their genius was developed and immortalised, such an unrivalled group produces the most interesting and impressive effect. Honour to the deceased and encouragement to the living are thus beautifully blended.

Of the *Louvre* it may be sufficient to say, that it has well survived the just deprivation of the plundered charms with which its walls were covered. Immense as the gallery is, thirteen hundred feet long, there is not, at this moment, room for another picture, which is accounted for by the proprietors of the best private collections having supplied from them the loss it had sustained. That the aggregate is not to be despised,

you will believe, when I mention the names of the masters, whose paintings may be considered the property of the public:—*Raphael, Titian, Correggio, Guido, Rembrandt, Vandyke, Leonardo de Vinci, the Carracci, Rubens, Salvator Rosa, Teniers, Gerard Dow,* all the Flemish and Dutch schools, a few *Holbens,* very many *Claudes, Wouvermans, Paul. Brill, Potter, Poussin, Vernet,* and others of inferior note, but not a single one unworthy of admiration. And yet, singular to say, with such matchless models continually before their eyes, the taste of the Parisians, generally speaking, is not to be esteemed. From national vanity or predilection, in many respects deserving a better designation than an amiable weakness, they prefer the paintings of their own *David* to many of the renowned masters I have enumerated. Two of his most celebrated pieces, "the Rape of the Sabines" and "the Departure of Leonidas for Thermopylæ," are exhibited in a spacious

building, which was formerly the Church of the *Sorbonne*, but now appropriated to this purpose. With many indisputable claims to admiration, their defects immediately struck me, who do not pretend to be a skilful connoisseur, and I would not presume to specify them, if they had not been sanctioned by an approved taste and judgment. His colouring is gaudy and glaring in the extreme,—no mellowness nor softness of relief, and in the figures, which constitute almost the entire, the limbs of the old are as smooth and round and taper as those of the most youthful, prominent and energetic of his heroes. When I ventured to state these objections to a Parisian friend, I was answered by a significant shrug of the shoulders, which meant at once to compassionate my ignorance and to despair of my improvement.

With a just detestation of the shocking purpose to which it had been converted, the Temple, where Louis the Sixteenth and his

unfortunate family were confined, has been razed to the ground; but a model of it is preserved, in which this scene of their unmerited miseries is accurately displayed. It was the prison of many other victims to the fury of the revolutionists, and some interesting anecdotes are recorded of the unhappy sufferers. At one time, there were eight young men there, denounced by secret accusations, upon which they were to be tried, without any previous knowledge of the crimes, that were imputed to them. One of their fellow-students watched outside the walls of a court, where they were permitted to play at tennis. The balls were often thrown into the street; he appeared to pick up and fling them back, but in reality he substituted others, which contained an account of the charges preferred against them in the Convention, and instructions for their defence, when they should be brought to trial. Even at such a distant period, it is

gratifying to know, that this ingenious contrivance of friendship and humanity was successful; for wonderful to relate, they were, every one, acquitted. A pretty device of one of the illustrious family of *Polignac*, who was immured in the Temple, attracted my attention. To beguile the tedious hours, he constructed a meredian, upon which were stamped in large characters five capital P's, signifying *Pauvre, Polignac, Prisonnier, Prend, Patience.* He hung it at his window, and endeavoured to allay the anxiety of his friends by this cautious and amiable communication.

As usual the Churches have been an object of my particular regard: to attempt a minute description of them would be foreign from my design, but I shall remark generally, that there is scarcely one of them which does not contain some valuable statuary or painting. Of the former, in the Church of *St. Roch*, the agonies of our

Saviour and the carrying to the tomb are the most awful and superb specimens of the art imaginable. It is impossible to behold them without the strongest mixed emotions of piety and horror. Amongst the numerous paintings, the most curious, although not the best, is one in the Cathedral of *Notre Dame*, "The Visitation of the Virgin," by *Jouvenet*. During the execution of this picture, it is asserted, that he was deprived of the use of his right hand by a paralytic stroke, and that he finished it with the left; but as there is not the slightest discernable difference in any parts of the piece, I believe the story to be one of those marvellous fabrications, by which the credulity of travellers is so frequently imposed on; admit, that the whole was performed with the left hand, and it will be sufficiently remarkable without conceding any more. There is here also, lately erected, a very fine monument to the last Archbishop of Paris, *Cardinal Bellay*; the full

length figure of *St. Denys*, which constitutes its principal beauty, reflects infinite credit on the artist. In the Sacristy, besides an abundance of highly prized relics, the dresses, which were made for the clergy on the coronation of Buonaparte, are carefully preserved and pompously exhibited. There are thirty-two of the most sumptuous description; they cost three thousand francs each, and are now only worn when the King goes to the Cathedral. The Church of *St. Genevieve*, which during the revolution was desecrated into a *Pantheon*, is now about to be restored to its original and proper purpose of a place of Divine worship, and a most magnificent one it will be. The resemblance to our St. Paul's must strike the most casual observer. I do not hesitate to give the former a decided preference, if it were only from this consideration, that its spacious aisles will all be occupied by the devout, whilst those of St. Paul's

seem merely meant for the few monuments which are "thinly scattered to make up a shew," and which serve but to discover the nakedness of the walls and the inutility of their extent. At *St. Genevieve* there is a subterraneous funereal chapel, in which the gloomy light is most appropriate to the design. In the vaults there are many sepulchral monuments to men of distinguished celebrity, amongst which those of *Rousseau* and *Voltaire* are conspicuously beautiful, and there are numerous closets, in which the remains of some of the revolutionary Generals are deposited, in coffins of stone. It is upon the whole the most awful sanctuary for the dead that I have ever seen. But if not equally awful, infinitely more affecting and interesting is the cemetery of *Pere-la-Chaise*. It is situated upon an elevated and gently sloping piece of ground in the vicinity of Paris, consisting of, I imagine, not less than ten English acres. Almost every grave is separately en-

closed within a hedge of evergreens, and planted with the choicest variety of flowers. The relatives of the deceased employ a person to keep them continually in order, and from the consequent neatness of the entire, it is impossible not to enjoy, in the most literal sense, a melancholy pleasure in walking over this consecrated ground. It is accordingly frequented, not indeed by the gay and unfeeling, but by the afflicted and the sympathising: and I could not behold, without many a secret pang, a multitude of mourners discharging the last duties of affection and preserving the remembrance of their departed friends; by the simple but sweet occupation of admiring and cherishing the shrubs upon their graves.

It would be a violation of my original engagement and my renewed promise, if I permitted myself to be tempted to enlarge upon the inexhaustible sources of instruction and amusement, with which Paris abounds. It

has often been denominated the spoiled child of France, and with the utmost propriety; for the entire ingenuity and wealth and power of the kingdom appear to be assembled here. No matter what your taste or your pursuits may be, here they will be gratified; if science or the fine arts be your delight, you may cultivate them without expence or inconvenience; pleasure, in the most comprehensive meaning of the word, is here the cheap possession of every one, who will enjoy it; devoid of susceptibility and genius, and absolutely incapable of happiness must be he, upon whose hands time hangs heavy for a single day, and who feels himself oppressed by listlessness and languor.

But whilst I yield to my enthusiasm, I may excite your envy,—so, in mercy, I will have done.

LETTER XV.

Paris, December, 1813.

IF I have been hitherto silent as to the effects, which the evacuation of France by the allied armies has produced upon the sentiments and manners of the people here, it was because I waited for the fullest information upon the subject; and this, from my extensive acquaintance and my French connections, I obtained within a shorter period than as a stranger I could otherwise have expected.

There appears then to be an universal sense of obligation and acknowledgment,

that the great Powers of Europe have acted with an honourable and magnanimous forbearance. But the principal merit of this is ascribed to the Duke of Wellington; for as it is known that he was better acquainted with the actual condition of the kingdom than any other foreign minister, so is it inferred, that to his representations they are indebted for the accomplishment of this important event; and thus will his Grace's name be transmitted to posterity as both the conqueror and the benefactor of France. As a necessary consequence of the evacuation, the personal attachment of the people to the King is increased, and their confidence in the Government considerably strengthened, for they are naturally aware that, unless the measures of his Majesty's Ministers were thought calculated to secure the stability of his throne and to prevent the recurrence of that anarchy which had before convulsed the nation, France would have continued to

be garrisoned by foreign troops, to the exhaustion of her finances and the depression of her character, for perhaps an interminable period. To be relieved from such a ruinous and mortifying predicament is no common cause for public congratulation, and that Monarch is deservedly popular with his subjects, the wisdom of whose administration has been so unequivocally acknowledged.

But however general these sentiments may be, I do not mean to represent them as being universal. The *Ultra-Royalists* rejoice upon many accounts at the withdrawing of the allied armies; but they are not so clearly convinced of the policy of the proceeding, and they certainly find any thing but a justification of it in the measures of the Ministry. Their opposition to the King's Government is of a double nature, arising from personal and political motives; and under the influence of both they think the Monarchy endangered and revolution ripen-

ing. Many of them had followed the fortunes of their Royal master and shared his adversity, when there was no prospect of reward but that which their own hearts conferred; and they complain of the ingratitude and want of feeling with which they are excluded from employment, and even the authors and abettors of their misfortunes raised upon their ruin. But I cannot subscribe to the conclusion, that there is a want of feeling in the King of France's character, because he has not found himself at liberty to entrust the administration of affairs to his former adherents. His first duty is the preservation of the Monarchy, and if in his opinion the principles of the *Ultra-Royalists* are incompatible with that, whatever painful sacrifices of private regards and affections it may require, his Majesty is bound to make them, and to discard every other consideration but that which affects so deeply the tranquillity and happiness of his kingdom.

It is not improbable, that the idea might have been suggested during his residence in England by the example of his Royal Highness the Prince Regent, who, under somewhat similar circumstances, from the most pure and patriotic motives, was induced to forego his private predilections and earliest attachments, for what he was convinced would be the most conducive to the prosperity of the empire he was called upon to govern.

As to the King's employing, in various departments of the state, individuals who had before been his enemies, instead of branding them with displeasure or with punishment, it is sufficient to record the noble declaration and magnanimous conduct of *Louis the Twelfth*, the great model of his Majesty. When he was Duke of Orleans, and engaged in a civil war for the Crown, he was taken prisoner at the battle of *St. Aubin*, by *La Tremouille*, who treated him with the utmost

severity. Released and seated upon the throne, he was advised to avenge himself upon his enemies, and particularly upon him who was the cause of his captivity. "No," said Louis the Twelfth, "a King of France does not espouse the quarrels of a Duke of Orleans; if *La Tremouille* have served his master with fidelity against me, he will serve me likewise against those who may be tempted to disturb the state." This princely sentiment may be conclusive authority for the generous oblivion which *Louis the Eighteenth* has exercised towards his personal enemies; but the political objections to it remain to be removed. Without entering into detail, the *Ultra-Royalists*, which, I must observe, is an inviduous appellation, are pursuaded that the tendency of the Ministerial measures is to subvert the Monarchy of France,—that, under the mask of constitutional freedom and a misjudged approximation to English liberty, democratic principles and practices are dis-

seminating throughout the land,—that the *Jacobins,* who would be otherwise a contemptible faction, are every day acquiring strength and influence,—and that in fact the King, with the best possible intention, is creating and employing instruments for his own destruction. Upon this reasoning, the removal of the allied armies is contemplated by many as a measure fraught with the most imminent danger, believing as they do, that their presence has been useful, and may ere long be necessary; but, for obvious reasons, the public avowal of this sentiment is cautiously avoided.

On the other hand it is urged, that the King of France was originally placed upon the throne, and subsequently restored to it under such peculiar circumstances as rendered it indispensable for him to consult the inclinations of the people, if, which does not appear, his own wishes and opinions had militated against them. It is suffici-

ently known, that he was not invited by the voluntary voice of the nation, happy as they were at his return, but that he was indebted to the successful arms of Europe for the restoration of his legitimate and hereditary rights. After a struggle of twenty-five years for freedom, stained as it had been by every criminal excess; it was impossible, that the public mind should not have undergone a complete revolution, or that the mode of government, from which they had emancipated, could ever have been acceptable again. It is true that *Buonaparte*, by a military despotism, had rivetted their chains so tightly, that they did not dare complain; but still a secret dissatisfaction was universally diffused, and a peaceful successor, who would have attempted to continue an absolute monarchy, must have seen the termination of the experiment at the moment that he tried it. It was therefore imperative upon the King to accommodate his measures to the newly-

created, but ineradicably confirmed character of his people; and by admitting them to a proper place and influence in the constitution, to convince them, that under the dominion of a family they had long loved so well, they might enjoy all the rights and liberties they had been struggling for in vain, and which even the last idol of their election had imperiously denied them.

As to the presumed danger from the countenance supposed to be shewn to the Jacobins, the paucity of their numbers and the impracticability of any designs they might harbour are said to be a sufficient answer. If many of them are employed, the sweets of office will reconcile them to the existing order of things; and if few, that circumstance will of itself prevent them from being formidable. In fact, every idea of revolution is generally considered in Paris to be a visionary apprehension; and the stability of the throne is asserted to be secured

upon the firmest of all foundations—the wisdom and justice of the laws, and the consequent affections of the people.

In representing these opposite opinions, I would not be thought to convey any insinuation against the honour or even the patriotism of the *Ultra-Royalists*; for I am perfectly persuaded, that they are actuated by no sinister or unworthy motives, but by the deepest conviction that the present political system is not adapted to the old inalienable character of Frenchmen, and therefore not likely to be permanent. Of their attachment to Royalty, and to the House of Bourbon there cannot be the slightest question; with the same object paramount in their hearts, they differ as to the means most widely from the King and and his Ministers; and without specifying other individuals, such is my veneration for the name of *Chateaubriand*, that I could with difficulty be brought to pronounce his

judgment erroneous or his conduct culpable. I can only lament in common with every friend to France, that such talents and such integrity should not be employed in the service of a King, who is so eminently qualified to estimate their value.

LETTER XVI.

Paris, December, 1818.

ONE of the most obvious effects of the evacuation upon the public mind is the freedom and the interest with which political questions begin to be discussed. An universal constraint and caution were manifest before, and the elasticity of the French character was repressed by the ignominy of beholding their country in the military occupation of victorious foreigners. But now in writing and conversation, the utmost latitude of independence prevails, and even the most trifling circumstance connected

with politics is debated with an energy peculiar to the people. Although the newspapers are not permitted, as with us, to be the organ of public opinion; pamphlets are free from such restriction, and accordingly the liberty of the press has degenerated into licentiousness here, after the example of England. The mischievous tendency of a licentious press are particularly to be dreaded in this country, where almost every individual delights in literature, and converses upon each successive publication with the most surprising sagacity and eloquence. Indeed the passion for reading and the love of the fine arts which characterise the middle and lower classes of society in Paris, constitute an essential difference between them and the people of all other countries that I have seen. As you pass through the streets, even the drivers of the *Fiacres* and *Cabriolets*, when unemployed in their vocation, or when waiting at a house, have generally their

books in their hands, and these, sometimes, of the highest order of *Belles Lettres.* The numerous print-shops are always surrounded by crowds of the commonalty, from whom the most judicious observations are often to be collected, and it has afforded me no small amusement to overhear the criticism of a sweeper of the crossings upon the fine exhibition of engravings in the windows on the *Boulevards.* From such causes, one might reasonably expect a civilization amounting to softness and gentleness of character, of which, it must be admitted, there are but few instances on record during the last thirty years. This period is however an unfair criterion; their effect is visible in a variety of ways: the proverbial politeness of the people, which anticipates your wishes—the mutual civility of the very poorest—the abstinence from course and profane expressions—the humanity to the brute creation—and the tenderness to children,—all struck

me most forcibly as emanating from the sources I have described, and establishing a reproachful contrast to the manners of my countrymen.

Another evidence of refinement and good taste is the passion of the Parisians for the stage. With different descriptions of entertainment, there are twelve theatres constantly open and crowded to excess every evening. Here too the justest discrimination is observable as to pieces and performers. Excellence is invariably applauded and encouraged; deficiency tolerated with but little indulgence. My expectations had been highly raised, and were, I confess, sadly disappointed. I have the misfortune to be fastidious in theatrical performance, have the arrogance to think, and I may add, what some of my friends will understand, the folly to speak for myself. Even the renowned *Talma* did not please me, or, I should rather say, fell short of my idea of perfection. I saw him in

what is called his *Triomphe,* the character of *Manlius.* He appeared to me to underact the minor parts, to affect a familiarity and ease which were inconsistent with tragic dignity, and under the influence of this habit, to recite the declamations with a rapidity which was almost ridiculous. At the same time I admit that this may be convenient, if not necessary, from the excessive length of many of the speeches; as an exertion of the lungs it was something most extraordinary, and as it brought down the loudest applauses from the house, I must conclude that in the French school, it was inimitable acting. But having said this, let me add, that in the most difficult and trying scenes, *Talma* was terribly fine; the contortion of his countenance and the agonies of his frame might perhaps be equalled but could not be surpassed by *Kean* himself. His voice is powerful but not melodious; his gesture is ungraceful, particularly with the left arm;

so that if he would but consent to suffer amputation of that limb, and learn to articulate more slowly, I should be inclined to pronounce him the most finished actor I had ever seen, not even with the exception of our celebrated *Kemble.*

At the Opera or Royal Academy of Music, my disappointment was still greater; the vocal part of it was below mediocrity, but the instrumental far superior to ours. The *Ballet* is however, I believe, unrivalled; not but I have seen a few as good or even better dancers at the Haymarket; but the entire *corps* does not admit of comparison. The other theatres have each their respective attractions, surpassing us infinitely in pantomime and burlesque. What I admired principally in them all as distinguishable from ours, was the classical chasteness of their decorations and the correctness of the costume. We have improved, I am aware, of late years in these essential points, but

have still much to learn, more than the ignorant or unreflecting would believe, before we can arrive at the perfection of the French.

Since the departure of our troops, there is not any observable alteration in the conduct of the Parisians to the English. Civility has been uninterrupted in all the intercourses of life, and from the removal of that cause of jealousy, is likely to increase rather than to diminish. Cordiality, generally speaking, has never existed, nor could it be expected. The best French society is extremely difficult of access, and their manners are what we should consider formal, upon a first impression; but I am inclined to think, that they are only more decorous than ours from that superiority of breeding which so widely distinguishes even the upper ranks of the two nations. To this circle, there are not many of the English admitted, and the most unexceptionable introduction is re-

quired. But, in Paris, there is a set of infidel, seditious wits, who are ready to receive emigrants from all parts of the world, provided they are disaffected to the Government of their own country, and unincumbered by any principles of religion. Of such cosmopolites in Church and State,

"Whom no King can govern and no God can please,"

there is a precious coterie established, and any one who can *give the sign* is welcomed into the *lodge*, and no further questions asked.

However, upon the whole, society in France is full of indescribable attractions: the politeness, the ease, the affability, the talent for conversation, and the anxiety to impart and to receive pleasure, produce an almost magical effect in every company you enter. Even in the provincial towns, much of the same polish and perfection prevails; literary subjects are discussed in the most masterly manner,—the invariable attention

to the gentler sex softens the asperities of the ruder; an emulation of agreeableness results from this, and the social circle is never disturbed or embittered by what is vulgarly called gossipping with us, where the defamation of a neighbour is often the amusement of an evening, and a talent for slander and scurrility, when accompanied by spurious wit, the best passport for reception into the contracted and contaminated hemisphere of of a country town. No—the French are too well-bred and too well-educated for this; they may pity the misfortunes, but they do not insult; they may lament in secret, but they do not openly ridicule the frailties of their friends.

A striking evidence of their social dispositions is to be found in their almost uninterrupted intercourse. The entire population of Paris appears to be poured into the streets, and every house deserted. Walk where you will, a gay and presumptively an

idle crowd presents itself; groups in animated conversation afford the gratifying spectacle of a people determined to be happy, and accomplishing their object by the most natural and easy means. Not that they are strangers to domestic comfort, words for which there is no synonime in their language, but they imbibed the idea during their residence in England: the numerous emigrants charmed by the realities of the delights which home confers on us, returned with improved conceptions and capabilities of moral and rational enjoyment. In consequence, it is no longer fashionable for husbands to forget their wives, wives to forsake their husbands, and both to neglect their children. They are no longer ashamed of discharging their duties, but proud of an exemplary attention to them; and if I have not been egregiously misinformed, with the exception of some of the revolutionary dross, connubial fidelity is as universal and respected

here as it was formerly derided and unknown. Much of this is unquestionably due to the ameliorated state of religion, a fact for which I was not prepared, but which all my enquiries and observations have tended to confirm. It is true, that the Church has been despoiled of the greater part of its property, and that the number of the clergy is necessarily diminished. But there is still a sufficient Priesthood, with sufficient funds. The people have awakened from their guilty dreams of infidelity, have justly attributed their calamities to the provoked displeasure of the Almighty, and by a natural re-action are now endeavouring to propitiate Him whom they had so long and impiously offended. The example of the King and his family has materially contributed to this happy alteration; and amongst the strange inconsistencies of the day, whilst one party accuses him of bigotry, another is enraged because he does not restore to the Church

that portion of their confiscated property which remains unsold. So difficult it is with the purest intentions and the wisest views to harmonise conflicting opinions and to satisfy the demands of jarring interests.

Before I take my leave of France, it can be scarcely necessary for me to declare my almost unqualified approbation of every thing I saw, or to express my confident hope, that she will retain that position amongst the Powers of Europe, to which she has been restored by the Congress at Aix-la-Chapelle. I have found but little to invalidate the probability of that hope being realised. Her past sufferings and her present situation afford the strongest security for so flattering a prospect. The whole world is interested in the tranquillity of so fair, so extensive, and so powerful a portion of the globe. Attempts may be made to disturb it, but I trust they will be futile. Impelled by impartiality, I have stated what I think to be

true; need I subjoin my wishes, that the people of France may expiate their offences, by loyal and peaceable demeanor, and that the House of Bourbon may be permanently seated upon the throne of their ancestors.

Highly as I have been gratified by my tour, you will believe, that I shall return with undiminished affection to the best and happiest of countries.

Postscript.

SINCE these letters went to press, extraordinary proceedings have taken place in France. The King and his Ministers have had recourse to measures of increased energy to strengthen and uphold the Government. Much as I may lament the necessity, I cannot condemn the adoption of the course they have pursued, nor can I perceive in it the danger to the future tranquillity of the country, at which many political writers in England have expressed their alarm. Their reasoning I have in a

great degree already answered by anticipation; and plausible as their arguments are, I consider them to be grounded in ignorance of the real state and disposition of the French. That so many Buonapartists should be promoted to the Peerage is the occasion of their terrors, when, in fact, his cause is utterly abandoned, his condition absolutely hopeless, and every project connected with his restoration must be altogether impracticable. The name of Napoleon is scarcely ever mentioned, and, I am willing to admit, upon the preceding accounts; for that there are many unalterably attached to him, it would be idle to deny. Decidedly as I abhor the wild career of his ambition, and the total disregard of principle which characterised his progress, it would evince a complete ignorance of human nature to suppose, that he had not left behind him, and still preserved, a number of admirers and adherents. But the King has

nothing to fear from them; and, by attaching them to his service, will disarm their hostility, which, from the circumstances I have stated, is absolutely impotent. They cannot be supposed indifferent to the welfare of their country, and without impeaching their affection for their former master, they may justify their loyalty by asserting with the Roman, "Not that I loved Cæsar less, but that I loved Rome more."

FINIS.

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